W.i.t.C.h

8

Will Irma Taranee Cornelia Hay Lin

GRAPHIC NOVEL

ULL-LENGTH COMIC STORIES!

AN UNEXPECTED RETURN

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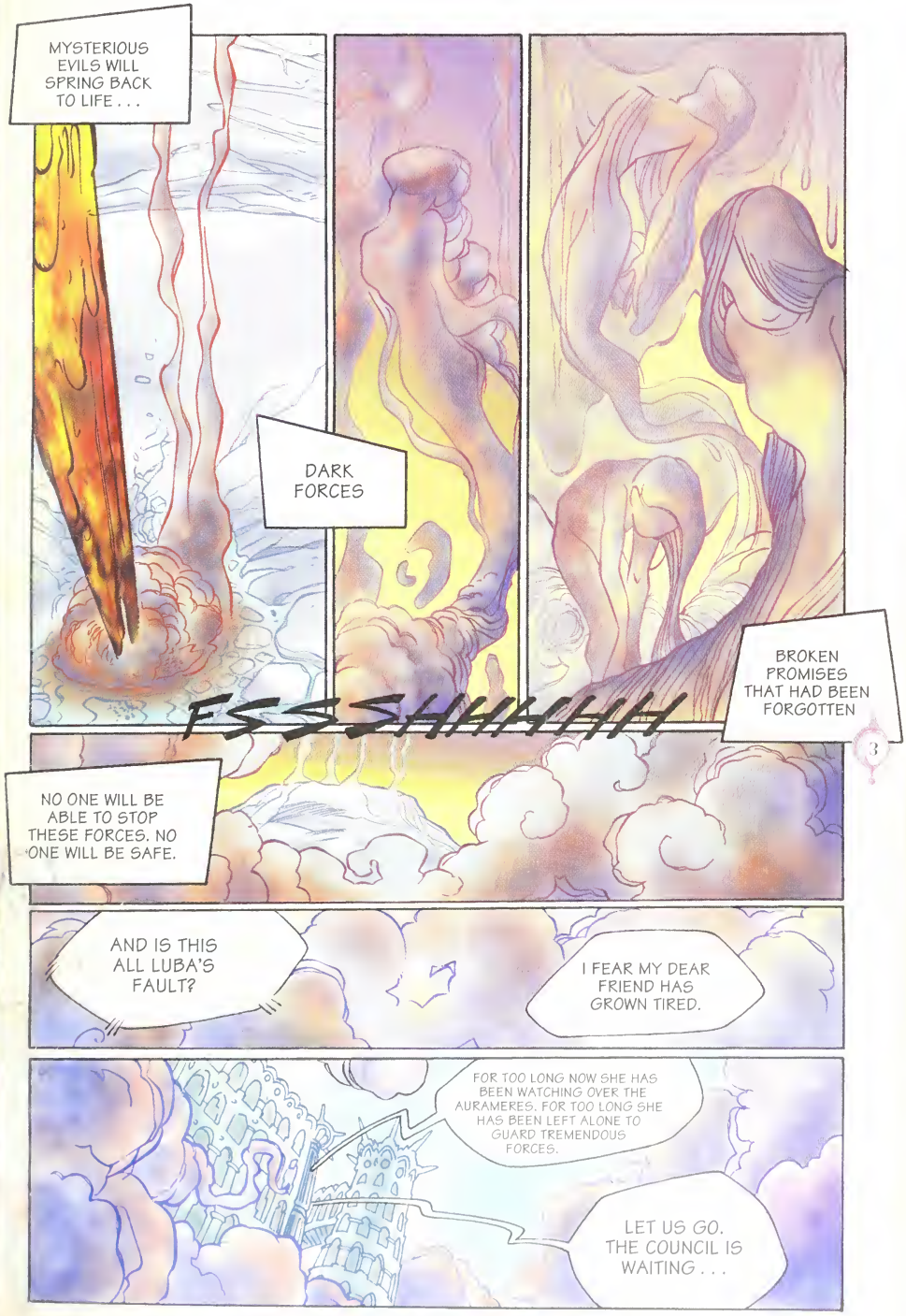
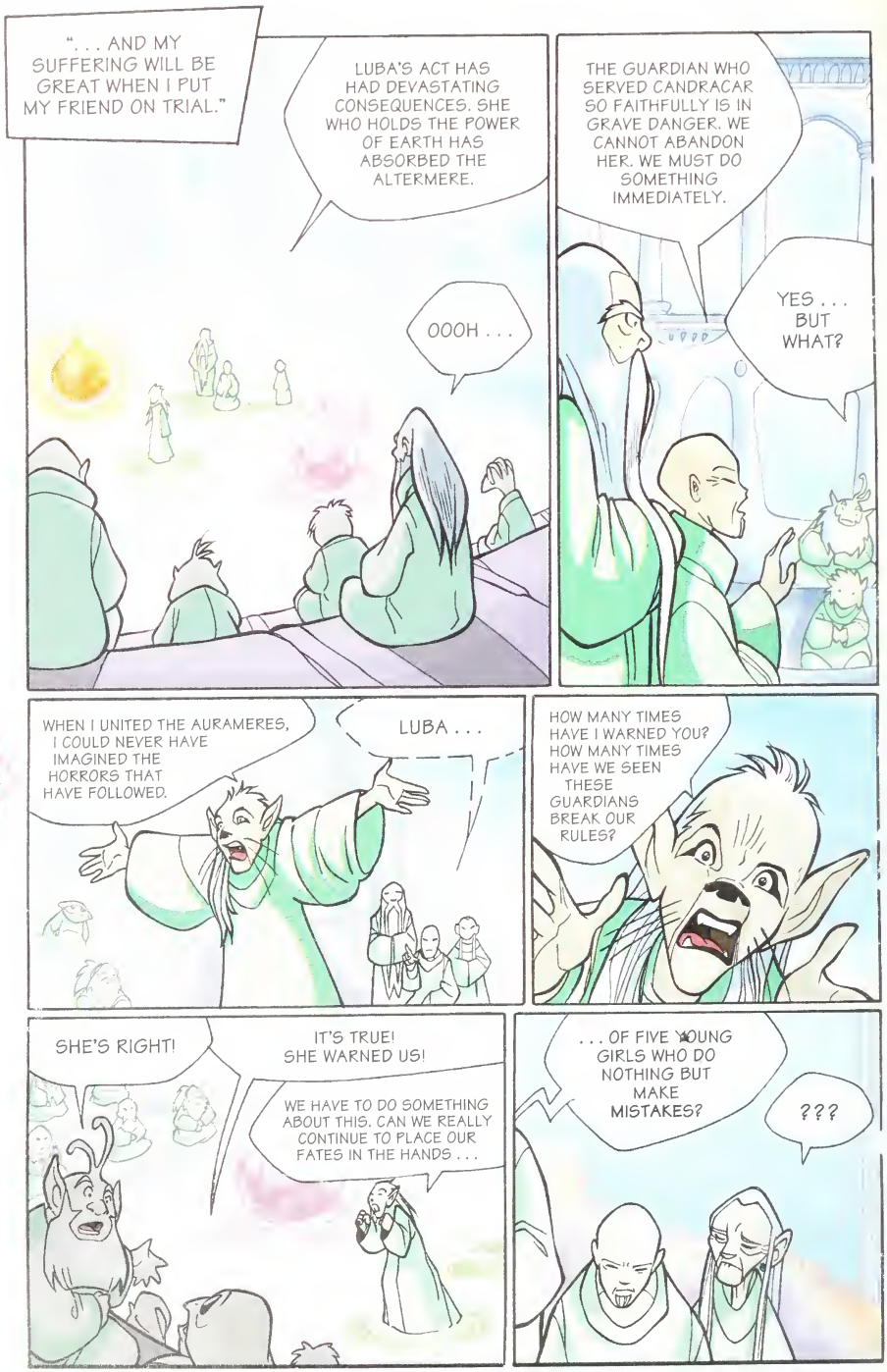
GRAPHIC NOVEL #8

AN UNEXPECTED RETURN


MYSTERIOUS EVILS WILL SPRING BACK TO LIFE . . .
DARK FORCES
BROKEN PROMISES THAT HAD BEEN FORGOTTEN
FSSSHHHHH!!
NO ONE WILL BE ABLE TO STOP THESE FORCES. NO ONE WILL BE SAFE.
AND IS THIS ALL LUBA'S FAULT?
I FEAR MY DEAR FRIEND HAS GROWN TIRED.
FOR TOO LONG NOW SHE HAS BEEN WATCHING OVER THE AURAMERES. FOR TOO LONG SHE HAS BEEN LEFT ALONE TO GUARD TREMENDOUS FORCES.
LET US GO. THE COUNCIL IS WAITING . . .


". . . AND MY SUFFERING WILL BE GREAT WHEN I PUT MY FRIEND ON TRIAL."
LUBA'S ACT HAS HAD DEVASTATING CONSEQUENCES. SHE WHO HOLDS THE POWER OF EARTH HAS ABSORBED THE ALTERMERE.
OOOH . . .
THE GUARDIAN WHO SERVED CANDRACAR SO FAITHFULLY IS IN GRAVE DANGER. WE CANNOT ABANDON HER. WE MUST DO SOMETHING IMMEDIATELY.
YES . . . BUT WHAT?
WHEN I UNITED THE AURAMERES, I COULD NEVER HAVE IMAGINED THE HORRORS THAT HAVE FOLLOWED.
LUBA . . .
HOW MANY TIMES HAVE I WARNED YOU? HOW MANY TIMES HAVE WE SEEN THESE GUARDIANS BREAK OUR RULES?
SHE'S RIGHT!
IT'S TRUE! SHE WARNED US!
WE HAVE TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT THIS. CAN WE REALLY CONTINUE TO PLACE OUR FATES IN THE HANDS . . .
. . . OF FIVE YOUNG GIRLS WHO DO NOTHING BUT MAKE MISTAKES?
???

YOU WERE THE FIRST ONE TO MAKE A MISTAKE, LUBA.
BUT I HAD NO CHOICE.
I HAD TO PROVE TO YOU THAT I WAS RIGHT ABOUT THE GUARDIANS.
HOW ELSE COULD I HAVE DONE IT? THERE WAS NO OTHER WAY.
LUBA WASN'T WRONG TO ACT THE WAY SHE DID.
BUT THESE GUARDIANS SAVED MERIDIAN!
THAT WAS PURE LUCK!
I WILL ALLOW YOU TO PRONOUNCE WHATEVER SENTENCE YOU THINK NECESSARY.
SO BE IT!
THE KEEPER OF THE AURAMERES WILL LEAVE US WHILE THE COUNCIL DECIDES . . .
. . . WHAT IS TO BECOME OF HER.
. . . AND THE GUARDIANS?
THOSE GIRLS ARE TOO YOUNG AND SELF-CENTERED . . .

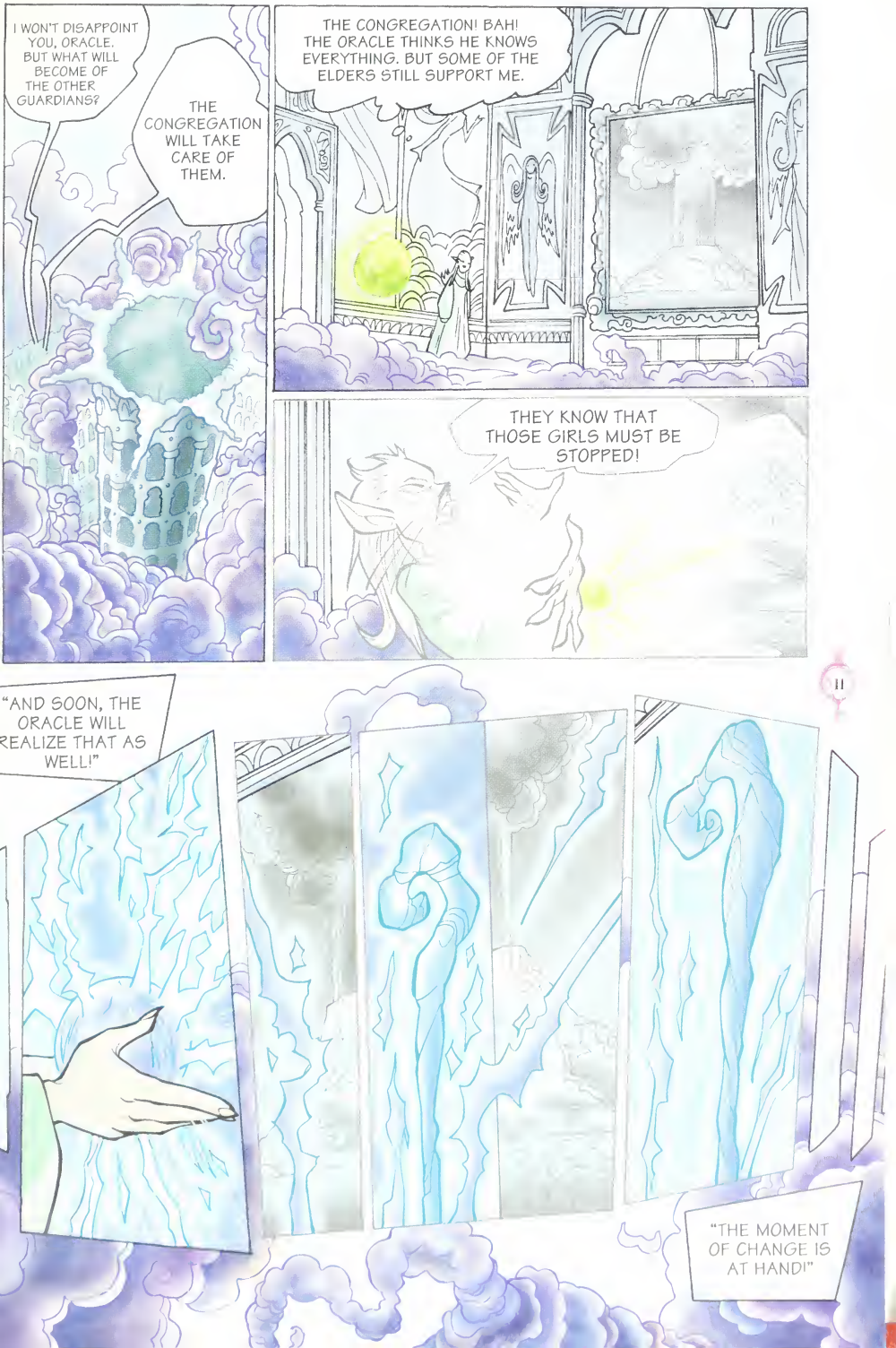
"TOO IMMATURE . . ."
COME ON, IRMA. DON'T BE LIKE THIS. JUST WAIT.
NO! WE CAME HERE TO TALK, AND ALL WE ENDED UP DOING WAS GETTING A DOOR SLAMMED IN OUR FACES. AS FAR AS I'M CONCERNED, THERE'S NOTHING MORE TO SAY.
AND THIS TIME, I MEAN IT!
SEE YOU SOON, YOUNG LADY.
I WOULDN COUNT ON
YOU AREN'T GOING TO SOLVE ANYTHING WALKING AWAY LIKE THIS.
WANNA BET? TO ME, THIS WHOLE GROUP-POWER THING IS OVER FOR GOOD. YOU OBVIOUSLY DON'T KNOW ME VERY WELL, TARANEE.
I'D BEND OVER BACKWARD FOR A FRIEND, BUT I'M NOT GOIN TO LET SOMEBODY TREAT ME LIK THIS, ESPECIALLY WHEN I'M ONL TRYING TO HELP HER!

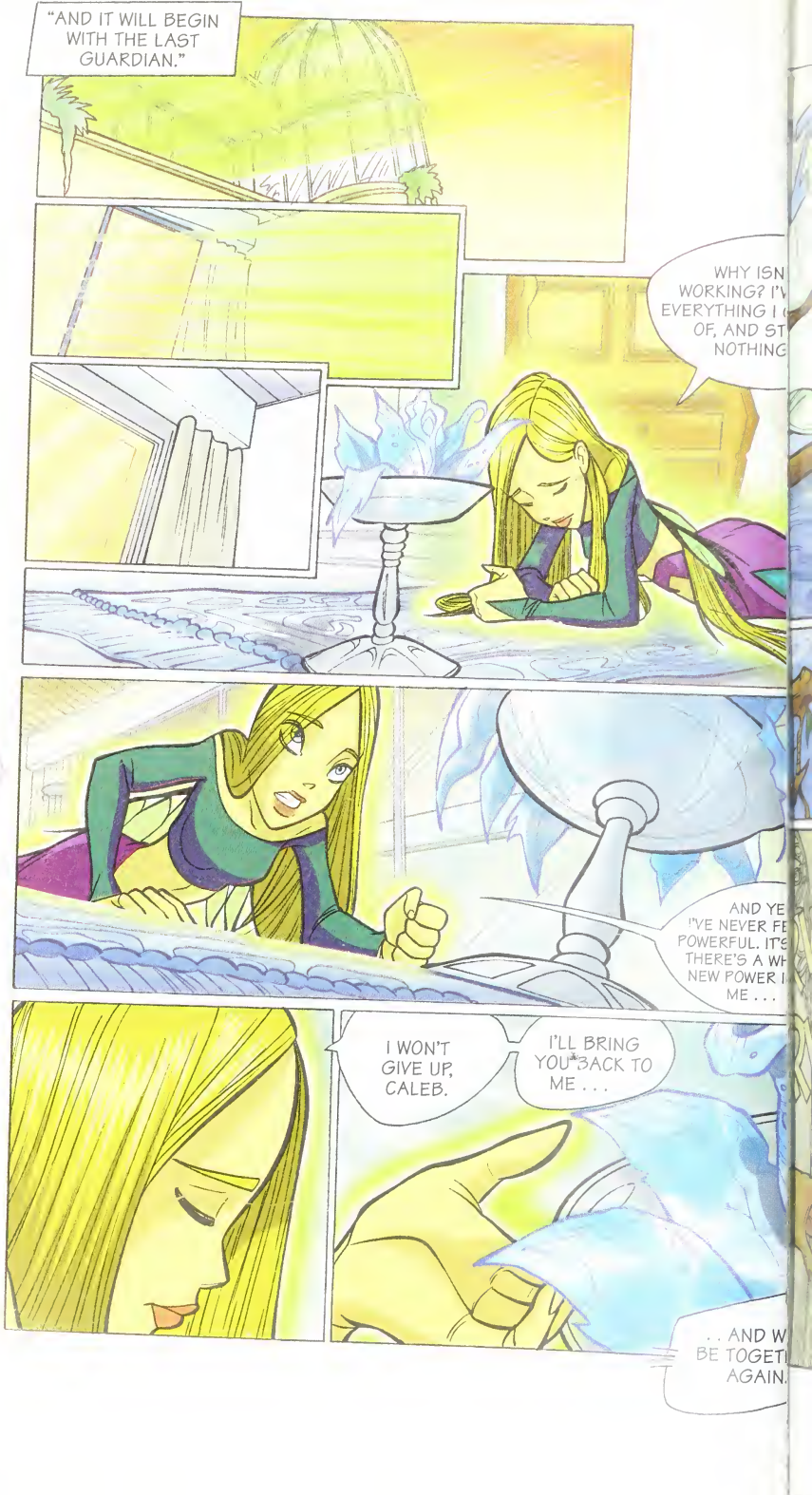
YOU SHOULDN'T BE SO HARD ON CORNELIA. SHE'S . . . SHE'S CHANGED . . .
YEAH— FOR THE WORSE!
WHAT IF SOMETHING STRANGE HAPPENED TO CORNELIA WHEN SHE HUGGED THAT CREATURE POSING AS WILL?
THAT'S NO EXCUSE! SHE WAS STRANGE BEFORE.
IDES, I HAD CONTACT THAT CREATURE, TOO, DIDN'T GET ALL WEIRD. ALL HAD RUN-INS WITH RANGE CREATURES BEFORE.
CORNELIA HAS ABSOLUTELY NO EXCUSE FOR BEHAVING LIKE THAT. SHE KICKED US OUT!
WELL . . . MAYBE YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE MADE THAT JOKE ABOUT CALEB . . .
STOP TRYING TO MAKE EXCUSES FOR HER, HAY LIN.
I'M OUTTA HERE . . .
OKAY, IRMA. GO AHEAD AND LEAVE. BUT DON'T FORGET, CORNELIA'S OUR FRIEND . . .

WE HAVE TO HELP HER.
YOU GUYS CAN DO WHATEVER YOU WANT...
BUT FROM NOW ON, COUNT ME OUT.
NOW WHAT DO WE DO?
WITH ONLY THE TWO OF US AND NO POWERS? GOOD QUESTION.
BUT WE HAVE TO DO SOMETHING. WHY DON'T YOU GO TO WILL'S PLACE AND TRY TO HELP HER GET OUT OF THAT FIGHT WITH HER MOM?
THEN GET HER OVER HERE AS SOON AS YOU CAN.
SOUNDS GOOD. WHA WILL YOU DO?
I'M GOING BACK TO CORNELIA'S TO FIND SOME WAY TO GET HER TO OPEN THAT DOOR!

HAS ABSORBED FIRE, AIR, AND HEART . . .
I DON'T UNDERSTAND HOW, BUT I KNOW I CAN DO THIS, CALEB . . .
MEOW . . .
I CAN FEEL THE POWER WITHIN ME . . .
I'LL BRING YOU BACK TO LIFE, CALEB. I'LL MAKE EVERYTHING RIGHT AGAIN.
WHOOSH . . .
AAAH
NO! WHY? WHY ISN'T IT WORKING?

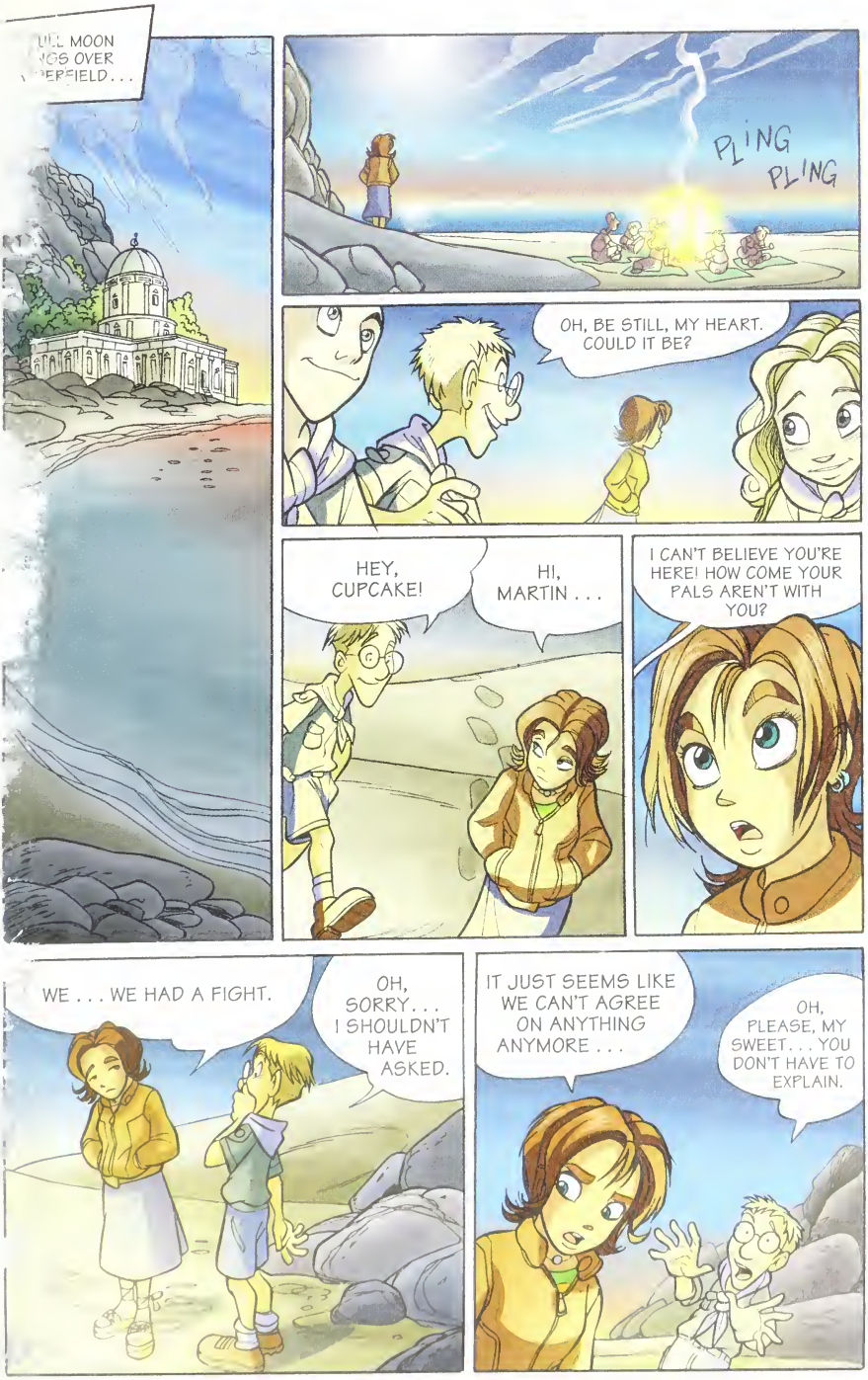
TIME IS RUNNING OUT, ORACLE. THE POWERS WILL SOON OVERWHELM HER.
WE HAVE REACHED A DECISION.
THE COUNCIL HAS NOT FORGOTTEN YOUR MANY YEARS OF SERVICE, LUBA. WE WILL GIVE YOU A CHANCE TO MAKE UP FOR WHAT YOU'VE DONE.
GO TO THE EARTH GUARDIAN. DO WHATEVER YOU CAN TO RESOLVE THE CATASTROPHE THAT YOU HAVE CAUSED.
I SHALL OBEY, ORACLE.
PERFECT! THIS IS MY CHANCE . . .
AND PLEASE, DEAR FRIEND . . . DO NOT BETRAY THE TRUST THAT HAS BEEN GRANTED TO YOU.

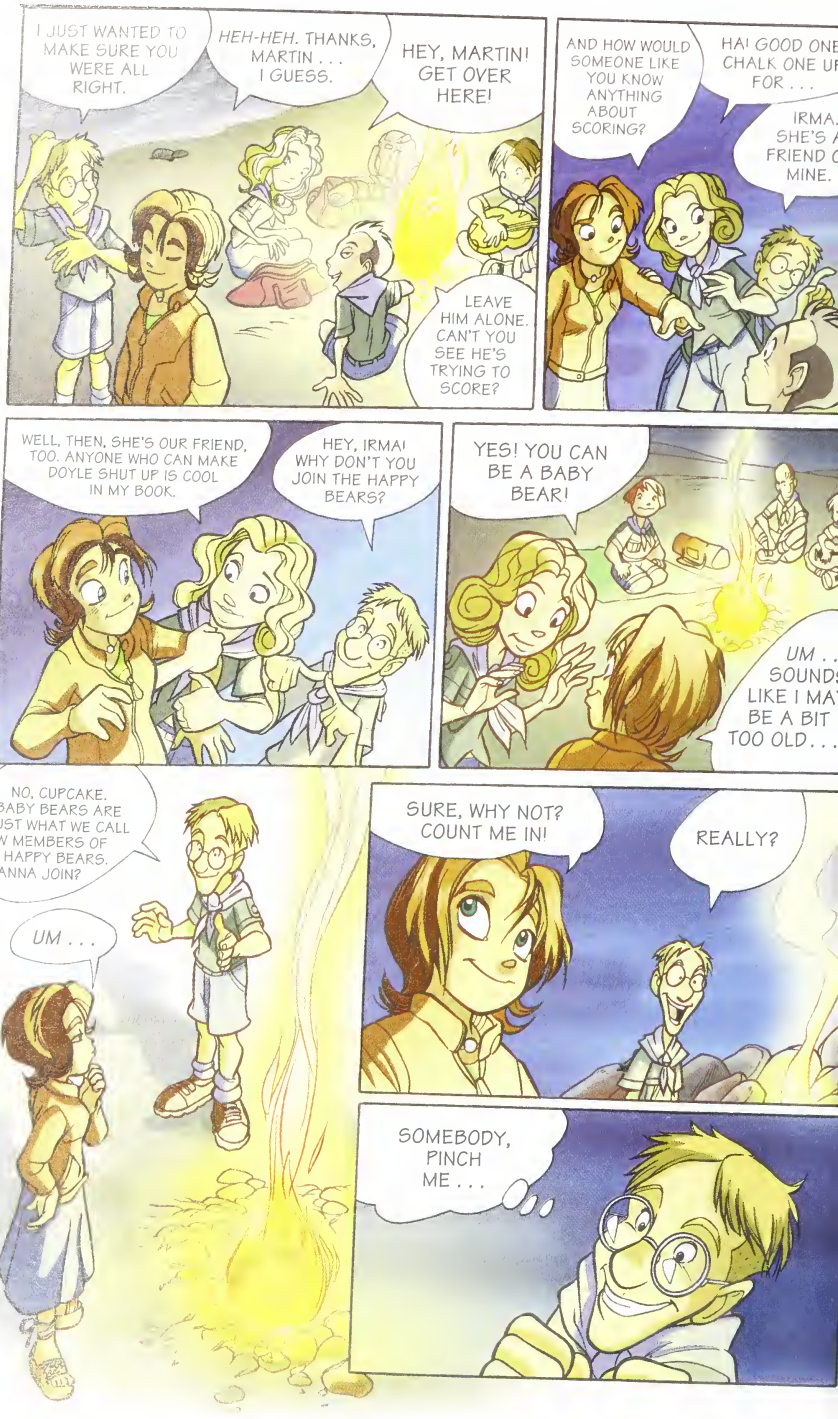

I WON'T DISAPPOINT YOU, ORACLE. BUT WHAT WILL BECOME OF THE OTHER GUARDIANS?
THE CONGREGATION WILL TAKE CARE OF THEM.
THE CONGREGATION! BAH! THE ORACLE THINKS HE KNOWS EVERYTHING. BUT SOME OF THE ELDERS STILL SUPPORT ME.
THEY KNOW THAT THOSE GIRLS MUST BE STOPPED!
"AND SOON, THE ORACLE WILL REALIZE THAT AS WELL!"
"THE MOMENT OF CHANGE IS AT HAND!"


"AND IT WILL BEGIN WITH THE LAST GUARDIAN."
WHY ISN
WORKING? I'V
EVERYTHING I
OF, AND ST
NOTHING
AND YE
I'VE NEVER FE
POWERFUL. IT'S
THERE'S A WH
NEW POWER I
ME . . .
I WON'T GIVE UP, CALEB.
I'LL BRING YOU BACK TO ME . . .
. . AND W
BE TOGETH
AGAIN.

ZZZ
WHAT HAVE YOU DONE?
SHTZZZ
AAARGH!
RING RIIING
TU-TUMP
CORNELIA? CORNELIA! OPEN UP! IT'S ME, TARANEE.
TUMP TUMP TUMP
WHY WON'T SHE ANSWER?
EXCUSE ME! ARE YOU FINISHED MAKING ALL THAT NOISE?

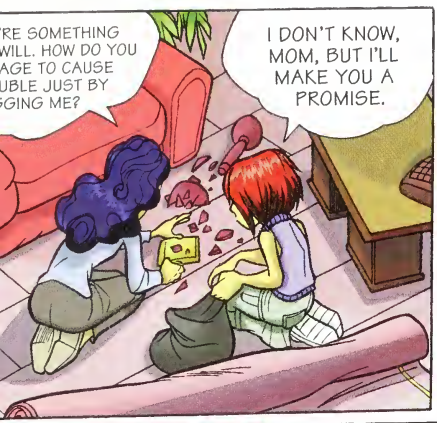
IT'S QUITE OBVIOUS THAT MISS HALE IS NOT AT HOME.
BUT I'M PRETTY SURE SHE WAS JUST. . .
YES, YES, I'M SU SHE WAS. ANYW SHOULDN'T YO BE AT HO STUDY
I DON'T HAVE ANY HOMEWORK FOR TOMORROW.
WELL, I'M SURE YOU CAN FIND SOMETHING BETTER TO DO THAN MAKE NOISE ON MY FLOOR.
LITTLE WITCH . . .
I HEARD THAT!
WITHOUT MY POWERS, I HAVE NO WAY OF GETTING PAST THAT DOOR.
BUT MAYBE I COULD JUMP DOWN ONTO CORNELIA'S TERRACE FROM THE FIRE ESCAPE. HMMM . . . IT'S WORTH A TRY.


...ULL MOON
...GS OVER
...ERFIELD...
PLING
PLING
OH, BE STILL, MY HEART. COULD IT BE?
HEY, CUPCAKE!
HI, MARTIN...
I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU'RE HERE! HOW COME YOUR PALS AREN'T WITH YOU?
WE... WE HAD A FIGHT.
OH, SORRY... I SHOULDN'T HAVE ASKED.
IT JUST SEEMS LIKE WE CAN'T AGREE ON ANYTHING ANYMORE...
OH, PLEASE, MY SWEET... YOU DON'T HAVE TO EXPLAIN.


I JUST WANTED TO MAKE SURE YOU WERE ALL RIGHT.
HEH-HEH. THANKS, MARTIN . . . I GUESS.
HEY, MARTIN! GET OVER HERE!
LEAVE HIM ALONE. CAN'T YOU SEE HE'S TRYING TO SCORE?
AND HOW WOULD SOMEONE LIKE YOU KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT SCORING?
HA! GOOD ONE CHALK ONE UP FOR . . .
IRMA, SHE'S A FRIEND O MINE.
WELL, THEN, SHE'S OUR FRIEND, TOO. ANYONE WHO CAN MAKE DOYLE SHUT UP IS COOL IN MY BOOK.
HEY, IRMA! WHY DON'T YOU JOIN THE HAPPY BEARS?
YES! YOU CAN BE A BABY BEAR!
UM . . . SOUNDS LIKE I MA BE A BIT TOO OLD . . .
NO, CUPCAKE. BABY BEARS ARE JUST WHAT WE CALL NEW MEMBERS OF THE HAPPY BEARS. WANNA JOIN?
UM . . .
SURE, WHY NOT? COUNT ME IN!
REALLY?
SOMEBODY, PINCH ME . . .

ODY HAVE AN EXTRA
GE? WE OFFICIALLY
VE A NEW MEMBER
F THE HAPPY
BEARS!
I'VE GOT ONE, BUT IT'S REALLY OLD.
GREAT! YBE IF IT'S TY, IT'LL GIVE A LOOK OF ENIORITY.
THERE! WELCOME TO OUR GROUP.
HEY! WHY DON'T WE PLAY A ROUND OF SUMMERBUMMER TO CELEBRATE?
WANT TO PLAY?
UM, IT SOUNDS LIKE A REALLY WEIRD GAME . . .
. . . SO I THINK I'LL LIKE IT!
OKAY, THE GAME IS ABOUT THE SUMMER SCHOOL COURSES WE'LL HAVE TO TAKE.
THEN THIS WILL BE A PIECE OF CAKE. I'M GOING TO END UP WITH THREE OF THEM. YOU CAN'T BEAT THAT!
AN JUST PICTURE E PRINCIPAL NOW: WE EXPECTED ORE FROM OU, MISS AIR."
HA-HA-HA!
UM, CUPCAKE, THE OBJECT OF THE GAME IS TO GUESS HOW MANY SUMMER COURSES EVERYONE WILL HAVE TO TAKE.
OH, WELL, IT LOOKS LIKE GUESSING MINE WON'T BE MUCH OF A CHALLENGE . . .

SPEAKING OF CHALLENGES . . .
I COULD SAY THERE'S AN EMERGENCY—A FLOOD IN THE RESTAURANT! NO . . . I'D BETTER NOT JOKE ABOUT STUFF LIKE THAT.
I'M SO GLAD WE'RE NOT MOVING, MOM. YOU'RE THE BEST!
THANKS, SWEETIE, B FROM NOW ON WE HAV TRUST EACH OTHER LITTLE MORE.
WHAT DO YOU SAY?
DEAL!
I LOVE YOU, MOM!
WOW! I'D FORGOTTEN WHAT YOUR OUTBURSTS OF JOY WERE LIKE.
THUMP
CRASH
OKAY, WILL, THAT'S ENOUGH!
UH-OH! SOUNDS LIKE THINGS AREN'T GOING WELL!


'RE SOMETHING
WILL. HOW DO YOU
AGE TO CAUSE
UBLE JUST BY
GGING ME?
I DON'T KNOW, MOM, BUT I'LL MAKE YOU A PROMISE.

FROM NOW ON, MY ROOM WILL ALWAYS BE PERFECTLY CLEAN. IT'LL SPARKLE. YOU'LL BE ABLE TO EAT OFF THE FLOOR.
I'LL BELIEVE IT WHEN I SEE IT.

LL EVEN COOK! AND TAKE
OUT THE GARBAGE!
DO YOU EVEN KNOW WHERE THE GARBAGE GOES?
RING

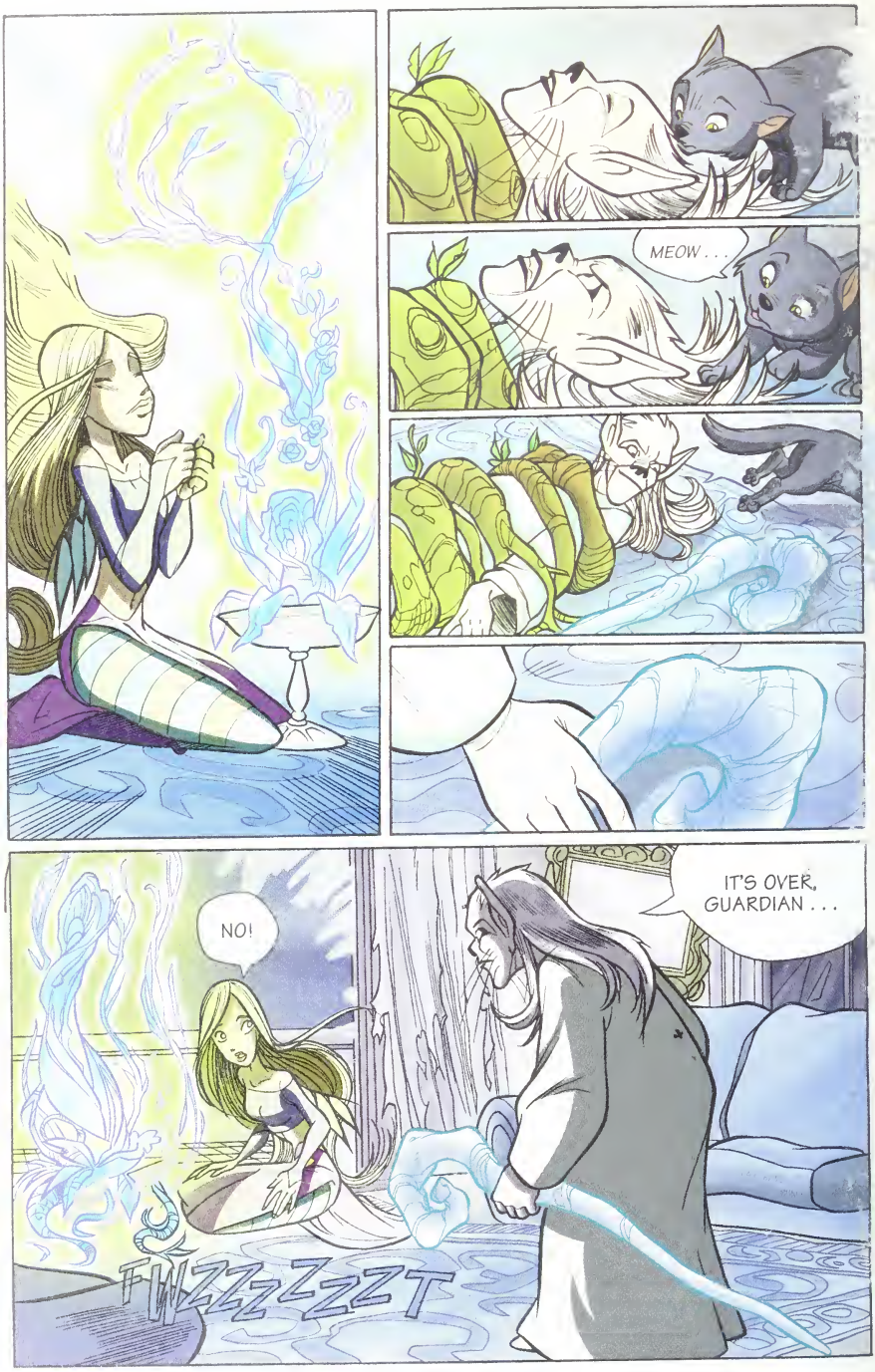
WERE YOU EXPECTING SOMEONE?
NO, BUT THE WAY MY LUCK'S BEEN TODAY. . .

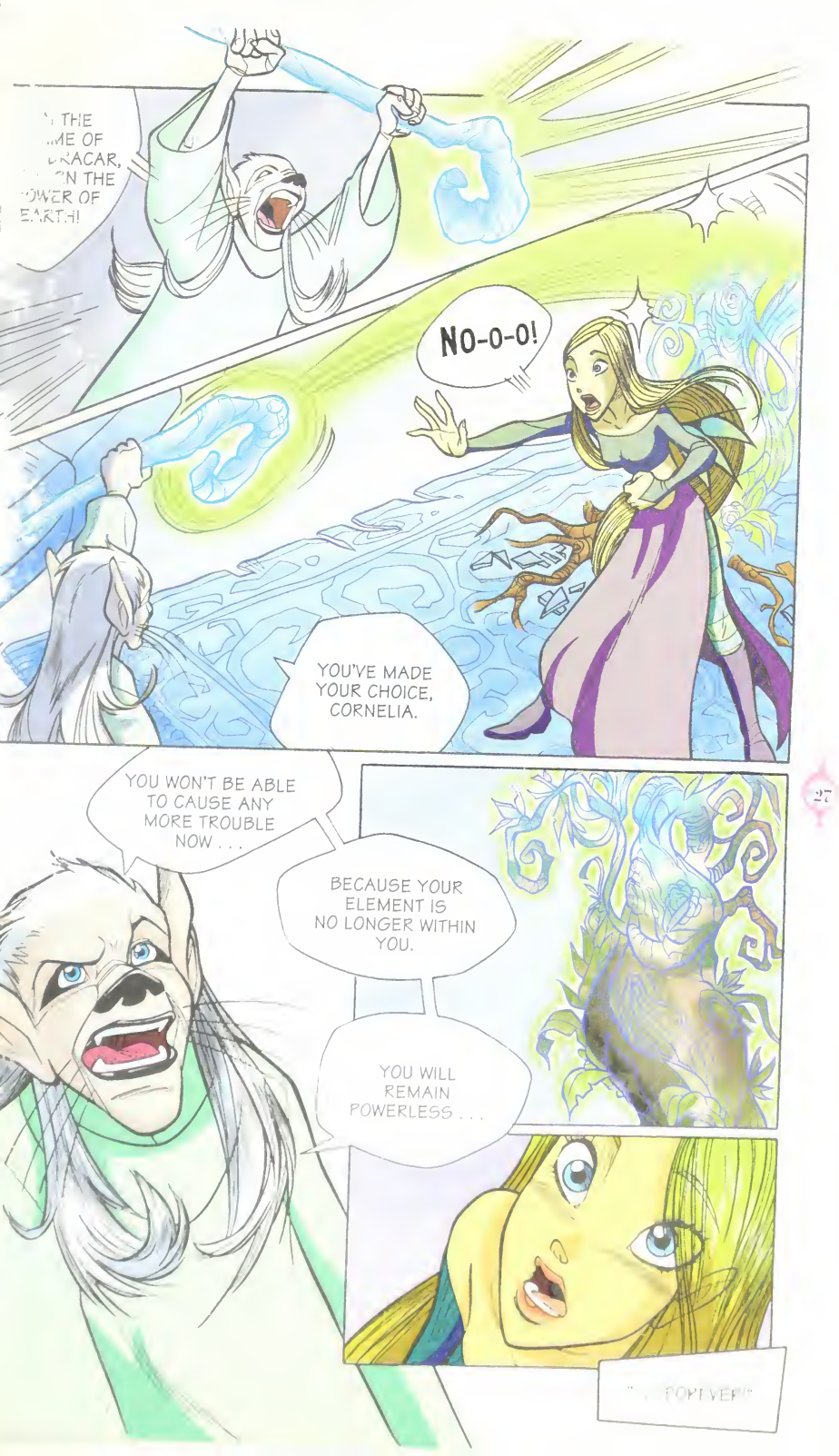
. . . IT CAN'T BE ANYTHING BAD. . .

HEY, WILL . . .
UH-OH. DID I SPEAK TOO SOON?

YOU'VE GOT TO COME WITH ME. IT'S REALLY IMPORTANT.
I—I DON'T KNOW IF MY MOM WILL LET ME. IT'S ALREADY LATE.
OH, HI, HAY LIN. HOW ARE YOU?
. . . IF WE COULD GO . . .
. . . FOR SOME ICE CREAM!
SLAM
CAN I, MOM?
WILL, JUST A MOMENT AGO WE WERE TALKING ABOUT TRUST. THAT'S A COMMITMENT THAT GOES BOTH WAYS.
SO IF WE'RE GOING TO BE SERIOUS ABOUT IT, I WANT YOU BACK HOME BY TEN, OKAY?
THANKS, MOM! JUST ENOUGH TIME TO GRAB A SUNDAE.
TIME FOR A SUNDAE, HUH? YOU'LL HAVE TO GET THE BIGGEST ONE THEY'VE GOT, THEN . .

Y SILENT
HALE
HOLD.
ERE'S NO
IING BACK
NOW.
I'M SORRY I HAD TO DO THIS TO YOU, LUBA.
AND NOW, CALEB . . .
. . . COME BACK TO ME.
FFFZZZZZ


MEOW . . .
NO!
IT'S OVER, GUARDIAN . . .
FWZZZZZZT


THE
ME OF
RACAR,
N THE
OWER OF
EARTH!
NO-O-O!
YOU'VE MADE YOUR CHOICE, CORNELIA.
YOU WON'T BE ABLE TO CAUSE ANY MORE TROUBLE NOW . . .
BECAUSE YOUR ELEMENT IS NO LONGER WITHIN YOU.
YOU WILL REMAIN POWERLESS . . .
POREVER!

OH, CALEB . . . HE . . . HE WAS COMING BACK TO LIFE.
I WARNED YOU!
WHAT DID YOU DO TO HIM?
MOM WOULD PROBABLY CALL THIS BREAKING AND ENTERING. WHICH, I GUESS, IT IS.
BUT I HAVE A GOOD REASON. STILL, IT'D TAKE MORE THAN THAT TO CONVINCE HER. MAYBE I SHOULD START LOOKING FOR A GOOD LAWYER.
YOU SHOULD HAVE LISTENED TO ME WHEN YOU HAD THE CHANCE!
SOMEONE'S IN THERE WITH CORNELIA! BUT WHO . . .

NOW YOU WILL HAVE TO FACE THE JUDGMENT OF THE CONGREGATION.
CORNELIA!

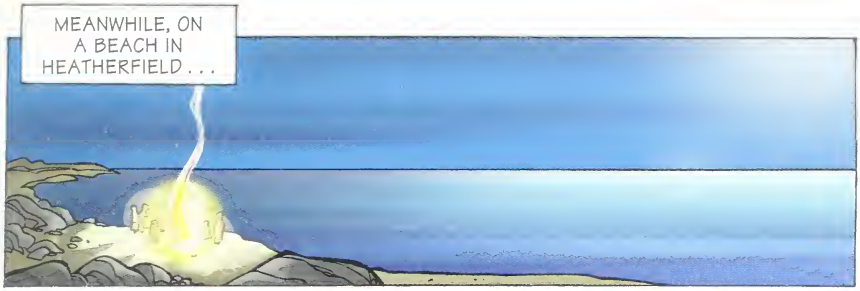
THE TEMPLE OF CANDRACAR, A PLACE OF PEACE, POWER . . .
. . . AND JUDGMENT.
KSHHH
FSHHH
URRRRRRRR!
HUH?
IT— IT CAN'T BE!

URRRR . . .
CALEB? CALEB?
CAN YOU HEAR ME?
OH, NO . . .
. . . WHAT HAVE I DONE?
WHAT HAVE I DONE?

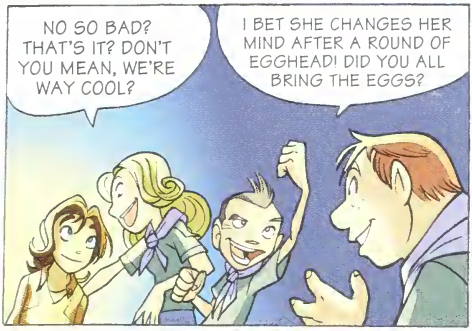
I HOPE YOU'RE SATISFIED NOW.
YOU! WHY DON'T YOU JUST LEAVE ME ALONE?
BECAUSE I HAVE TO CLEAN UP THE MESS YOU'VE MADE!
LOOK AT WHAT YOU'VE DONE. YOU'VE CREATED A MONSTER!
IS THIS WHAT YOU WANTED? ARE YOU HAPPY NOW?
!
I MAY HAVE MADE SOME BAD CHOICES, BUT THIS IS YOUR FAULT, TOO.
HA-HA-HA! PLEASE! I'M A WISE ELDER. YOU'RE JUST A LITTLE GIRL.
BUT YOU'RE THE ONE WHO CAUSED THE MAGIC TO BACKFIRE. I COULD HAVE BROUGHT CALEB BACK TO LIFE.
YOU STILL DON'T UNDERSTAN DO YOU?

THIS "CALEB" YOU SPEAK OF HAS NEVER EXISTED!
HE WAS JUST AN ILLUSION. ONE OF PHOBOS'S SERVANTS, WITH A HUMAN APPEARANCE . . .
YOU'RE . . . YOU'RE LYING! THAT'S NOT TRUE. IT CAN'T BE TRUE.
CALEB DESERVES TO BE PUNISHED ALONG WITH THE OTHER MURMURERS.
AND YOU MUST DECIDE WHICH SIDE YOU'RE ON. CHOOSE WISELY, CORNELIA.
MAYBE, IF YOU BEG THEIR FORGIVENESS, THE CONGREGATION WILL SEE IT FIT TO HAVE MERCY ON YOU.

WE SHOULD DO SOMETHING, ORACLE. THIS IS GETTING OUT OF HAND.
EVERYTHING COMES IN ITS OWN TIME, YAN LIN . . .
WE SHOULD NOT LET OUR PERSONAL FEELINGS AFFECT OUR JUDGMENT.
I'M SORRY. . . I WILL TRY TO BE PATIENT. . .
"I CAN WAIT."
THE TIME HAS COME FOR THE ELEMENTAL POWERS TO SHINE ONCE AGAIN IN THEIR AURAMERES.
S-FSHH!
BACK TO WHERE I CAN KEEP A CLOSE EYE ON THEM . . .
. . . UNTIL FIVE NEW GUARDIANS ARE CHOSEN!


MEANWHILE, ON A BEACH IN HEATHERFIELD . . .

SO, IRMA . . . ARE YOU HAVING FUN?
YOU KNOW, YOU HAPPY BEARS AREN'T SO BAD . . .


NO SO BAD? THAT'S IT? DON'T YOU MEAN, WE'RE WAY COOL?
I BET SHE CHANGES HER MIND AFTER A ROUND OF EGGHEAD! DID YOU ALL BRING THE EGGS?

UM, SHOULD I BE WORRIED, MARTIN?
DON'T WORRY, IT'S FUN. YOU'LL LOVE IT.

YOU JUST TIE A HANDKERCHIEF AROUND YOUR HEAD . . .

CHOOSE AN EGG, AND THEN WHACK IT AGAINST YOUR FOREHEAD! IF IT'S HARD-BOILED, YOU WIN, BUT IF IT ISN'T . . .
A HANDKERCHIEF FOR OUR NEWEST BABY BEAR?
GULP!

SPLAT
YUCK! I GOT A RAW ONE.
HA-HA-HA!
THAT'S ONE DOWN!
HA-HA-HA!
T-CHACK
OOPS!
OKAY, YOUR TURN! READY?
HERE GOES NOTHING. ONE . . . TWO . . .
CRONCK
UGH!
BDUMP
HA-HA-HA!
HE GOT THE STONE EGG!
UM, WHAT'S THE STONE EGG?
HA-HA-HA! IT'S AN EGG-SHAPED ROCK. WE ALWAYS HIDE ONE IN THE PILE.

WHAT? ARE YOU CRAZY? HOW CAN YOU GUYS FIND THIS FUN?
COME ON, HONEY BUNNY, IT'S JUST A GAME . . .
YEAH, "HONEY BUNNY," IF YOU WANT TO BE ONE OF US, YOU HAVE TO PLAY OUR GAMES. AND IT'S YOUR TURN . . .
SPLAT
I GUESS YOU LOSE!
SEE YOU AROUND, MARTIN!
BUT CUPCAKE! HOW CAN YOU LEAVE JUST LIKE THAT? I THOUGHT THE HAPPY BEARS WERE YOUR GOOD FRIENDS!
THANKS, MARTIN . . .
". . . BUT I ALREADY HAVE FOUR GOOD FRIENDS."
WHAT A MESS! CORNELIA'S PARENTS ARE NOT GOING TO BE HAPPY WHEN THEY GET HOME.

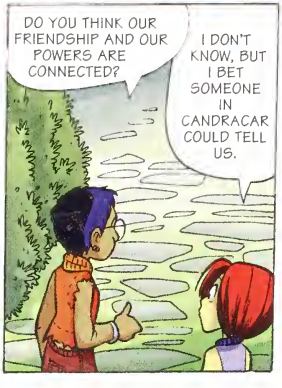
IF WE HAD OUR POWERS, WE COULD STRAIGHTEN THIS PLACE UP IN NO TIME.
IF WE HAD OUR POWERS, WE'D BE TRYING TO FIND CORNELIA. COME ON, LET'S GO.

I THINK THAT CREATURE WE SAW EARLIER HAS SOMETHING TO DO WITH OUR POWERS BEING GONE.
I THINK YOU'RE RIGHT.

YEAH, BUT IT'S MORE THAN THAT . . . WHEN WE WERE UNITED, WE WERE STRONG.
YOU'RE RIGHT . . .

. . . AND THEN WE STARTED DRIFTING APART, AND OUR POWERS FADED AWAY, AND NOW THEY'RE COMPLETELY GONE.

BUT WE WERE TOGETHER WHEN WE SAW THAT CREATURE.
WRONG. CORNELIA WAS MISSING.

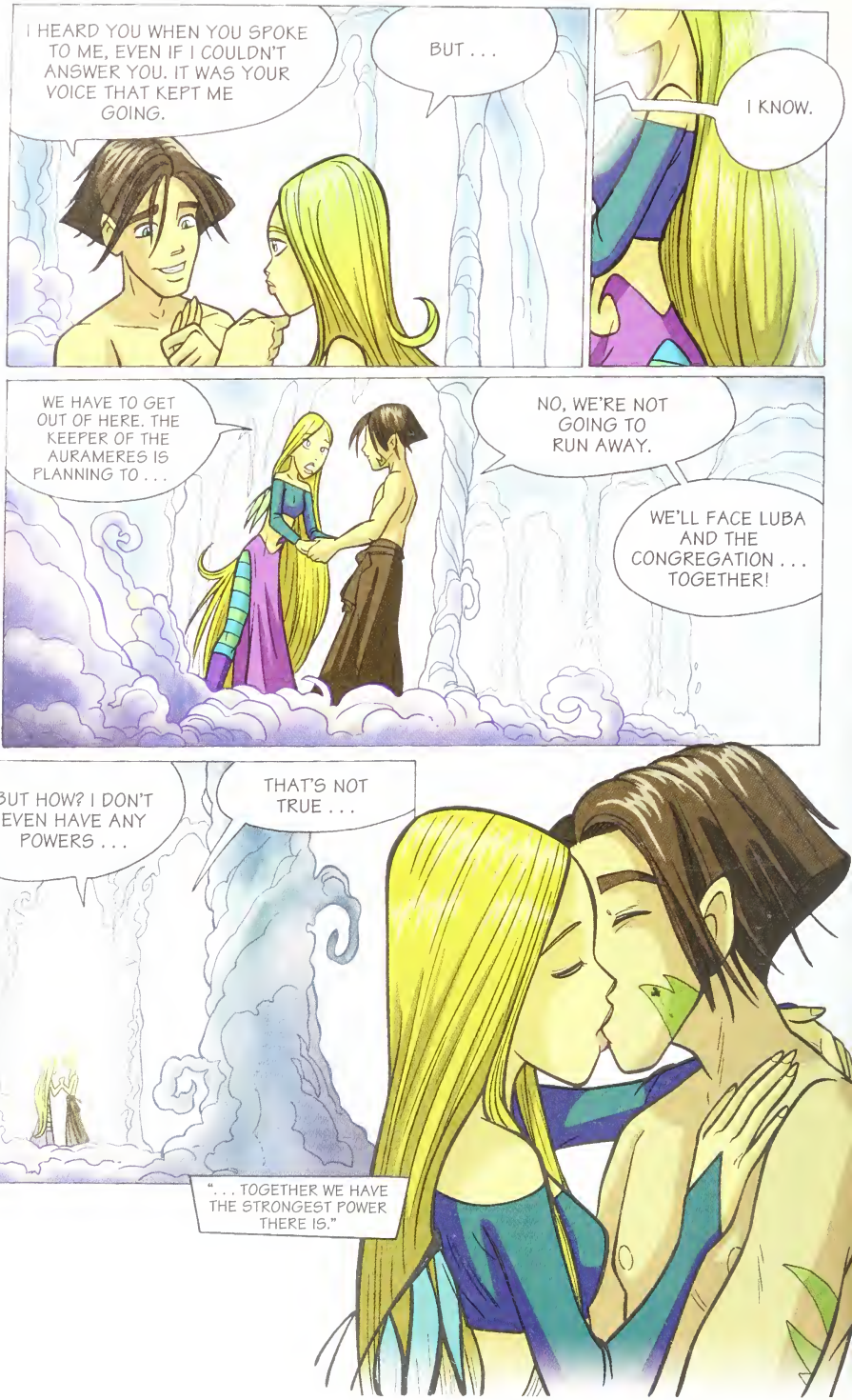

DO YOU THINK OUR FRIENDSHIP AND OUR POWERS ARE CONNECTED?
I DON'T KNOW, BUT I BET SOMEONE IN CANDRACAR COULD TELL US.

EXCEPT, I DON'T KNOW HOW WE'RE GOING TO GET THERE. WE'RE POWERLESS, AND WE'RE MISSING TWO PEOPLE.
GUESS AGAIN!

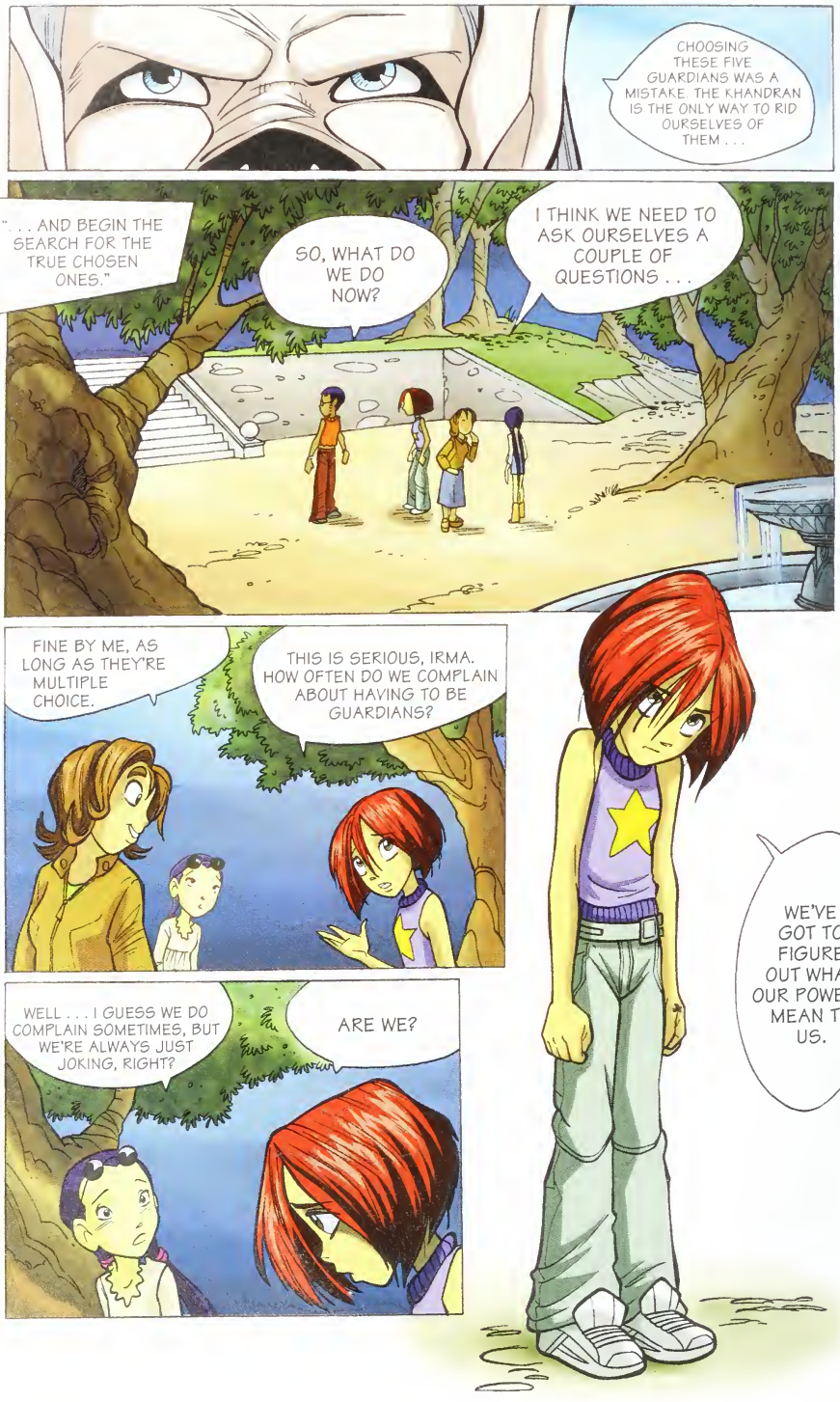
NOW THERE ARE FOUR OF US!
IRMA!
BACK IN CANDRACAR, ALL IS SILENT . . .
. . . AS A YOUNG GUARDIAN CONTEMPLATES HER FUTURE.
THIS IS NOT THE WAY IT WAS SUPPOSED TO END.
I CAN'T ACCEPT IT. I WON'T.
CALEB . . . CAN YOU HEAR ME? PLEASE . . . WAKE UP . . .

YOU CAN'T FORGET WHO YOU ARE . . .
YOU CAN'T FORGET ABOUT US!
YOUR TEARDROP. . .
WITHIN ME . . .
FOREVER!

CALEB! YOU'RE BACK!
CORNELIA!
I CAN'T BELIEVE IT'S REALLY YOU.
YOU BROUGHT ME BACK TO LIFE, CORNELIA.
OH, NO! DON'T LOOK AT ME! I'VE BECOME A MONSTER . . .
NO, YOU'RE BEAUTIFUL! AND I KNOW EVERYTHING THAT'S HAPPENED, CORNELIA.
EVEN THOUGH PHOBOS TURNED ME INTO A FLOWER, I COULD STILL HEAR EVERYTHING.


I HEARD YOU WHEN YOU SPOKE TO ME, EVEN IF I COULDN'T ANSWER YOU. IT WAS YOUR VOICE THAT KEPT ME GOING.
BUT . . .
I KNOW.
WE HAVE TO GET OUT OF HERE. THE KEEPER OF THE AURAMERES IS PLANNING TO . . .
NO, WE'RE NOT GOING TO RUN AWAY.
WE'LL FACE LUBA AND THE CONGREGATION . . . TOGETHER!
BUT HOW? I DON'T EVEN HAVE ANY POWERS . . .
THAT'S NOT TRUE . . .
". . . TOGETHER WE HAVE THE STRONGEST POWER THERE IS."

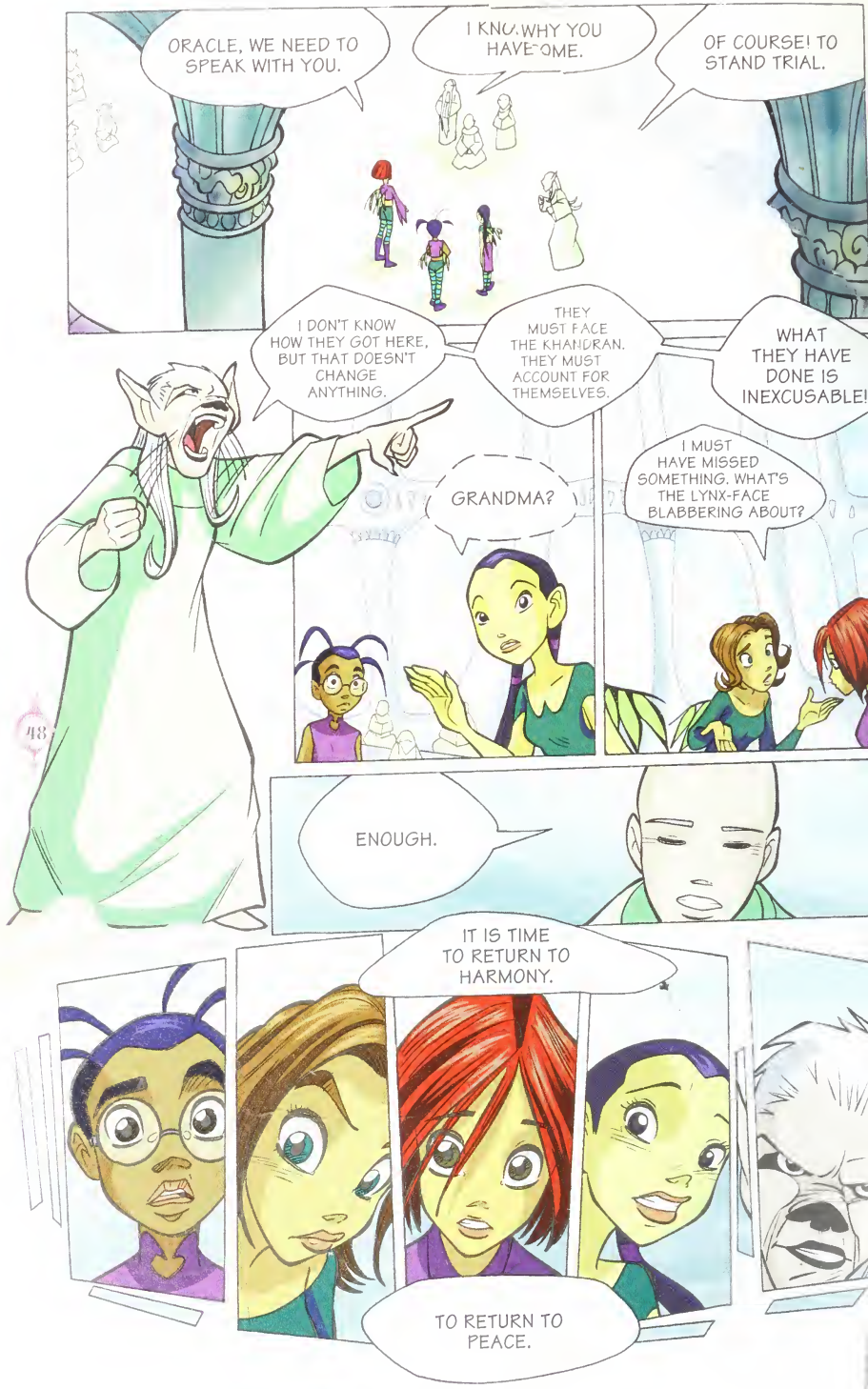
THE CONGREGATION PREPARES TO DECIDE.
DO YOU FINALLY SEE?
SHE'S BROUGHT PHOBOS'S SERVANT BACK TO LIFE! SHE'S A TRAITOR!
THAT'S FUNNY. SHE LOOKS LIKE SHE'S IN LOVE TO ME.
DO YOU REALLY THINK THE GIRL IS DANGEROUS, LUBA?
SHE HAS A BOLD SPIRIT, ORACLE.
EVEN AFTER I EXPLAINED THE TRUTH ABOUT CALEB, SHE REFUSED TO LISTEN. SHE HAS PROVED HERSELF UNWORTHY, JUST LIKE HER FRIENDS.
AND SHE IS THE WORST OF THEM ALL.
THIS IS UNACCEPTABLE.
YET CANDRACAR NEEDS THE FIVE GUARDIANS . . .
THE GUARDIANS HAVE BETRAYED US, AND THEY NEED TO BE REPLACED. FOR THIS REASON, I CALL FOR THE KHANDRAN!
THE KHANDRAN!
OOOH . . .

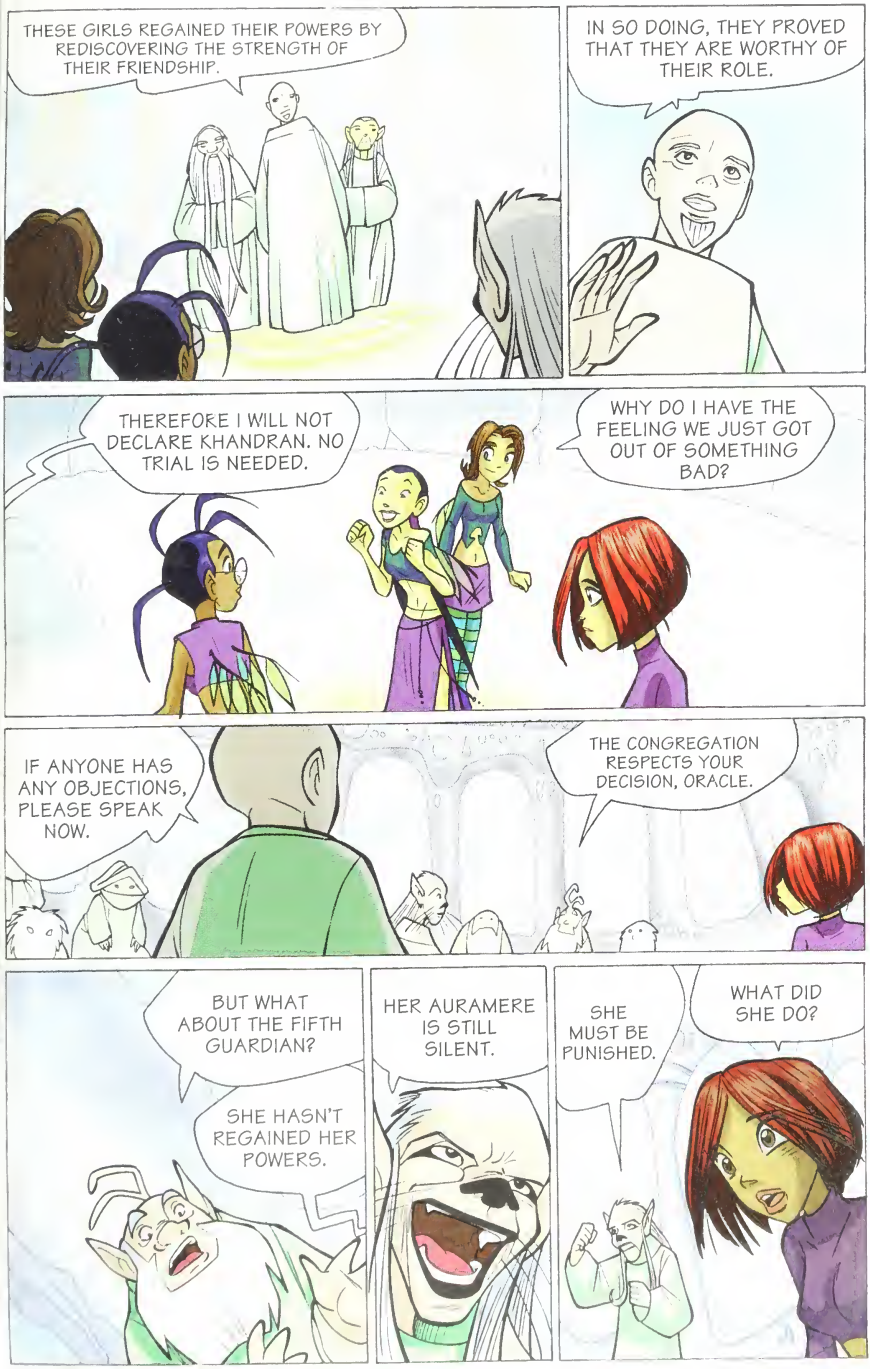

CHOOSING THESE FIVE GUARDIANS WAS A MISTAKE. THE KHANDRAN IS THE ONLY WAY TO RID OURSELVES OF THEM . . .
". . . AND BEGIN THE SEARCH FOR THE TRUE CHOSEN ONES."
SO, WHAT DO WE DO NOW?
I THINK WE NEED TO ASK OURSELVES A COUPLE OF QUESTIONS . . .
FINE BY ME, AS LONG AS THEY'RE MULTIPLE CHOICE.
THIS IS SERIOUS, IRMA. HOW OFTEN DO WE COMPLAIN ABOUT HAVING TO BE GUARDIANS?
WELL . . . I GUESS WE DO COMPLAIN SOMETIMES, BUT WE'RE ALWAYS JUST JOKING, RIGHT?
ARE WE?
WE'VE GOT TO FIGURE OUT WHAT OUR POWERS MEAN TO US.

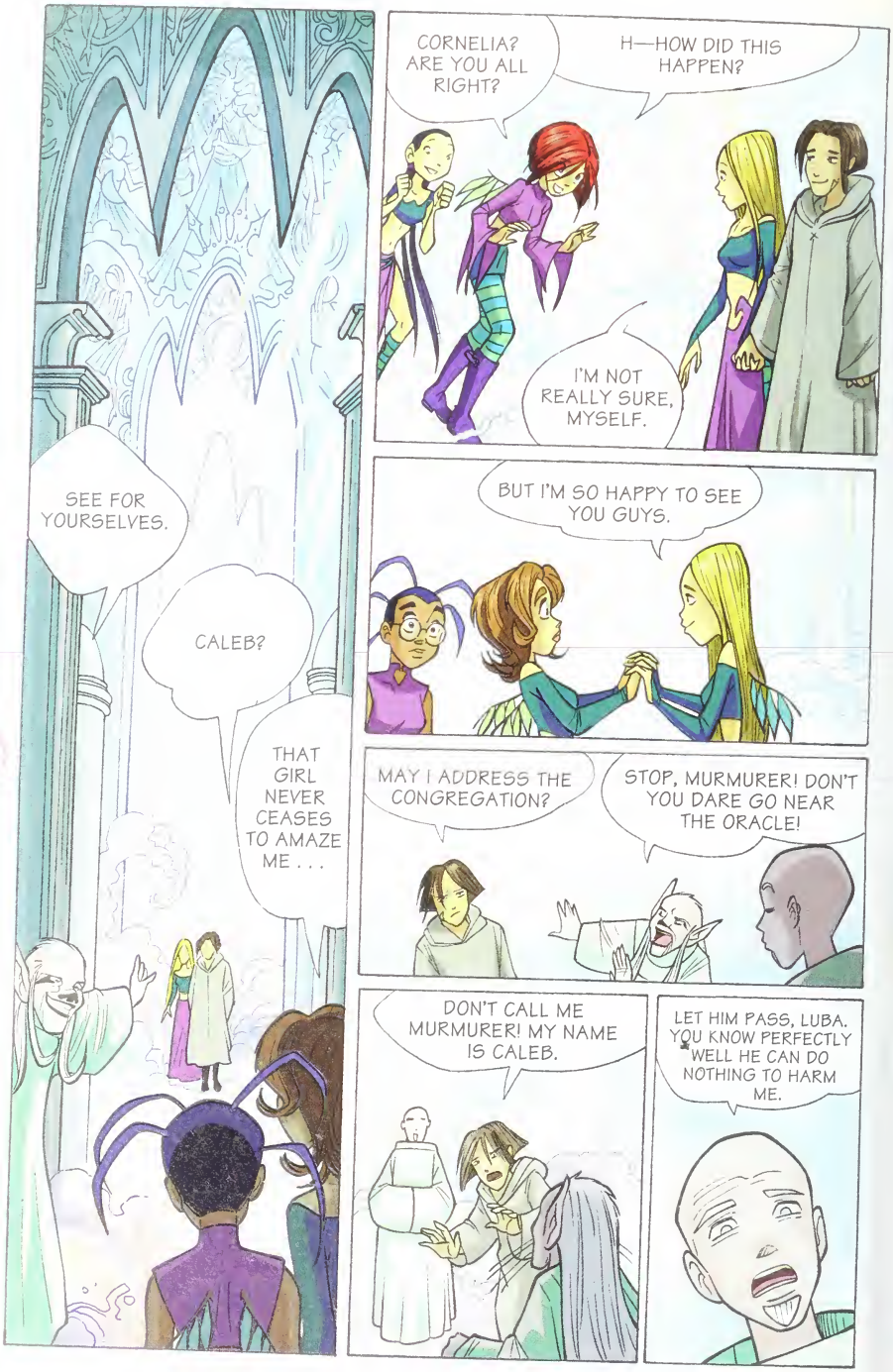
FOR ME, IT MEANS BEING ABLE TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE, LIKE WHEN WE HELPED THE PEOPLE OF MERIDIAN.
WELL, I LIKED HAVING THE POWER TO BE ABLE TO CONTROL QUIZ QUESTIONS . . . BUT I GUESS IT WAS MORE THAN THAT.
I BECAME MORE CONFIDENT.
LOSING MY POWERS FELT LIKE LOSING A LITTLE PART OF MYSELF. . .
FOR ME, TOO. I FELT LIKE MY LIFE HAD CHANGED.
LIKE OUR FRIENDSHIP HAS CHANGED.
THAT'S THE OTHER THING, GUYS. DO YOU THINK WE'RE REALLY FRIENDS?
OF COURSE WE ARE! WHY WOULD YOU EVEN ASK THAT?
BECAUSE WE DON'T ACT LIKE IT, HAY LIN. WE'VE FORGOTTEN SOMETHING THAT'S EVEN MORE IMPORTANT THAN THE HEART OF CANDRACAR . . .
THE POWER OF FRIENDSHIP.

BEST FRIENDS FOREVER?
ALWAYS!
THAT GOES FOR CORNELIA, TOO.
HEART OF CANDRACAR, IF YOU CAN HEAR ME, PLEASE TAKE US TO THE ORACLE.
ANYTHING?
NO, NOTHING.
COME ON, GUYS. WE CAN'T GIVE UP!
"WE HAVE TO BELIEVE MORE IN OURSELVES."
"WE HAVE TO BELIEVE IN FRIENDSHIP."

"IT'S GOT TO WORK."
YOU MST DECARE KHNDRAN, RACLE!
LUBA, I . . .
LOOK!
WE DID IT!
I KNEW WE COULD DO IT!
IT CAN'T BE!
WELCOME BACK TO CANDRACAR, GIRLS.
HOW COULD THEY HAVE GOTTEN THEIR POWERS BACK?
THE POWER OF AIR IS MINE AGAIN!
I FEEL THE POWER OF FIRE!
WATER FLOWS IN ME!


ORACLE, WE NEED TO SPEAK WITH YOU.
I KNOW WHY YOU HAVE COME.
OF COURSE! TO STAND TRIAL.
I DON'T KNOW HOW THEY GOT HERE, BUT THAT DOESN'T CHANGE ANYTHING.
THEY MUST FACE THE KHANDRAN. THEY MUST ACCOUNT FOR THEMSELVES.
WHAT THEY HAVE DONE IS INEXCUSABLE!
GRANDMA?
I MUST HAVE MISSED SOMETHING. WHAT'S THE LYNX-FACE BLABBERING ABOUT?
ENOUGH.
IT IS TIME TO RETURN TO HARMONY.
TO RETURN TO PEACE.


THESE GIRLS REGAINED THEIR POWERS BY REDISCOVERING THE STRENGTH OF THEIR FRIENDSHIP.
IN SO DOING, THEY PROVED THAT THEY ARE WORTHY OF THEIR ROLE.
THEREFORE I WILL NOT DECLARE KHANDRAN. NO TRIAL IS NEEDED.
WHY DO I HAVE THE FEELING WE JUST GOT OUT OF SOMETHING BAD?
IF ANYONE HAS ANY OBJECTIONS, PLEASE SPEAK NOW.
THE CONGREGATION RESPECTS YOUR DECISION, ORACLE.
BUT WHAT ABOUT THE FIFTH GUARDIAN?
SHE HASN'T REGAINED HER POWERS.
HER AURAMERE IS STILL SILENT.
SHE MUST BE PUNISHED.
WHAT DID SHE DO?

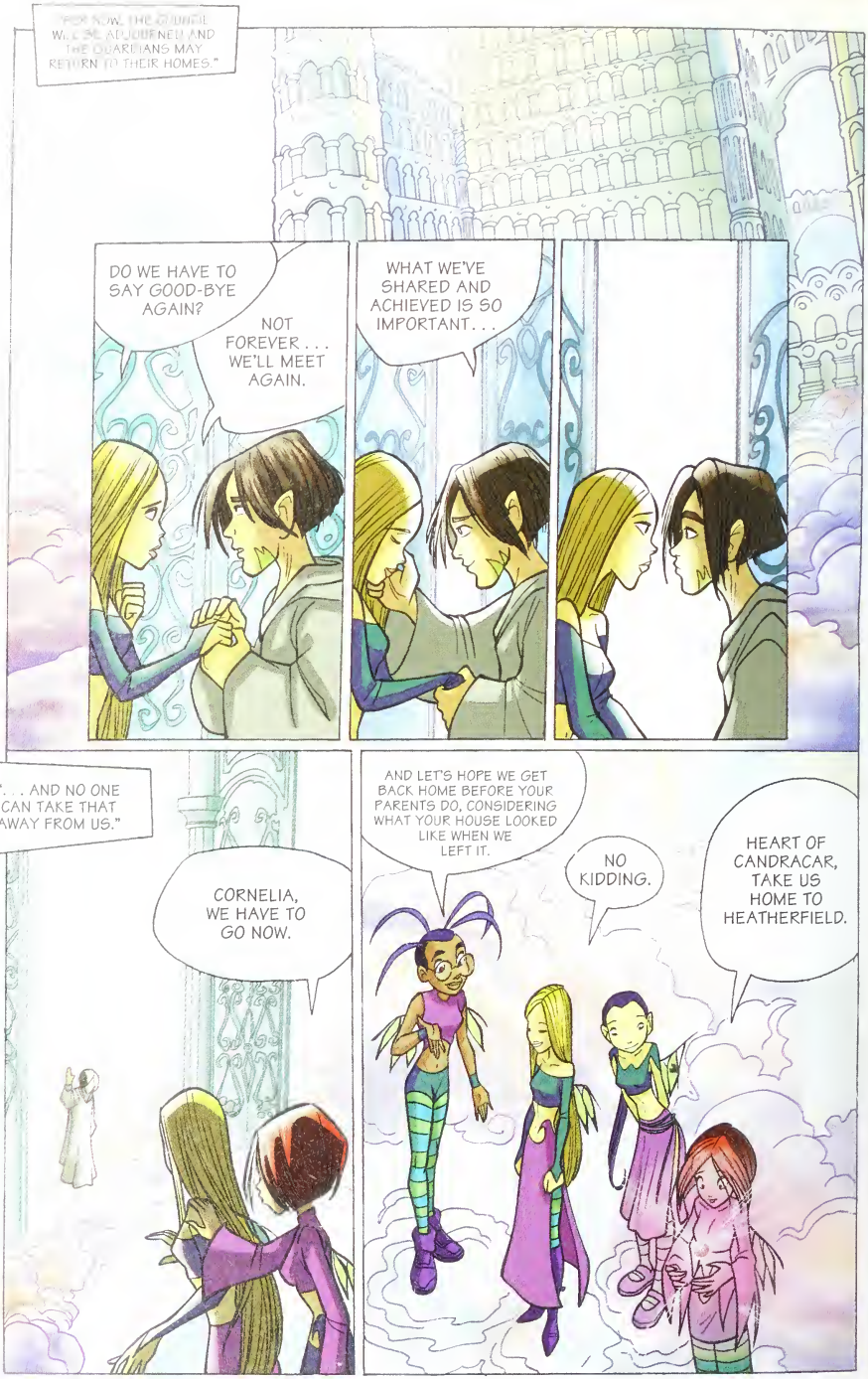

SEE FOR YOURSELVES.
CALEB?
THAT GIRL NEVER CEASES TO AMAZE ME . . .
CORNELIA? ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
H—HOW DID THIS HAPPEN?
I'M NOT REALLY SURE, MYSELF.
BUT I'M SO HAPPY TO SEE YOU GUYS.
MAY I ADDRESS THE CONGREGATION?
STOP, MURMURER! DON'T YOU DARE GO NEAR THE ORACLE!
DON'T CALL ME MURMURER! MY NAME IS CALEB.
LET HIM PASS, LUBA. YOU KNOW PERFECTLY WELL HE CAN DO NOTHING TO HARM ME.

SPEAK FREELY, CALEB. THE CONGREGATION IS LISTENING.
IF CORNELIA DID ANYTHING WRONG, IT WAS OUT OF LOVE FOR ME. I ASK THAT SHE BE GIVEN HER POWER BACK.
WELL SAID! WE SECOND THAT MOTION.
YES. THE FIVE OF US WILL ALWAYS BE A TEAM.
THAT'S MY GRANDDAUGHTER!
DON'T LISTEN TO HIM! HE IS AN EVIL CREATION OF PHOBOS!
THEN PUNISH ME, NOT CORNELIA.
ALLOW ME TO GIVE HER BACK HER POWER. THE SAME POWER SHE USED TO BRING ME BACK TO LIFE.
IN EXCHANGE, IF THE CONGREGATION AGREES, I WILL REMAIN IN CANDRACAR AS YOUR LOYAL SERVANT.

THE COUNCIL HAS OBSERVED AND UNDERSTOOD. AND IT HAS DECIDED TO ACCEPT CALEB'S OFFER.
NO!
THEREFORE, WE WILL PROCEED. MAY THE POWER OF EARTH NOW BE RETURNED TO ITS RIGHTFUL BEARER.
WOW! THEY'RE TOGETHER AGAIN.
AND WE WILL NEVER SPLIT UP AGAIN, EVER.
NO! I WON'T ALLOW IT.
LOOK OUT, CORNELIA!
LUBA . . . MY SWEET FRIEND . . .

STAY BACK!
AAARGH!
THUMP
THIS . . . THIS IS THE END OF CANDRACAR, ORACLE.
AND I DON'T INTEND TO STAY HERE AND HELP YOU TRY AND SAVE IT!
LEAN ON ME, ORACLE.
IT'S OVER NOW.
SHHH
SO DOES THAT MEAN WE WON?

FOR US, IT MEANS THAT EVERYTHING HAS TURNED OUT ALL RIGHT. BUT FOR CANDRACAR, THIS IS A DEFEAT.
HAY LIN IS RIGHT.
LUBA'S DEPARTURE IS A VERY GRAVE MATTER. NOTHING LIKE THIS HAS EVER HAPPENED IN THE ENTIRE HISTORY OF CANDRACAR.
IT LOOKS ALMOST LIKE THE ORACLE IS INJURED.
CALEB, I MUST ASK YOU TO LIVE UP TO YOUR PROMISE. FIND LUBA AND BRING HER BACK HERE . . . SAFE AND UNHARMED.
I WILL, ORACLE.



"FOR NOW, THE COUNCIL WILL BE ADJOURNED AND THE GUARDIANS MAY RETURN TO THEIR HOMES."

DO WE HAVE TO SAY GOOD-BYE AGAIN?

NOT FOREVER . . . WE'LL MEET AGAIN.

WHAT WE'VE SHARED AND ACHIEVED IS SO IMPORTANT. . .

". . . AND NO ONE CAN TAKE THAT AWAY FROM US."

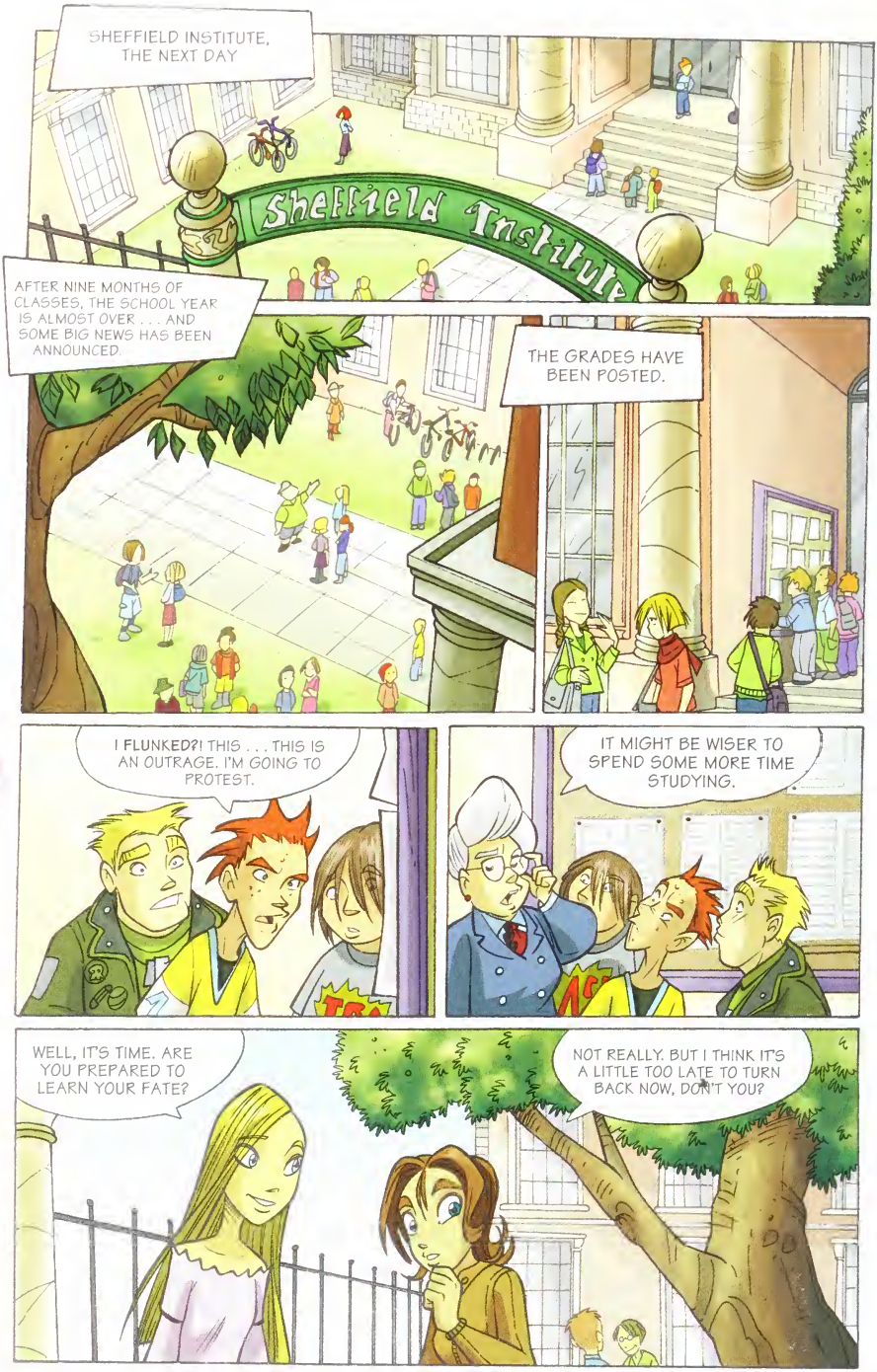
CORNELIA, WE HAVE TO GO NOW.

AND LET'S HOPE WE GET BACK HOME BEFORE YOUR PARENTS DO, CONSIDERING WHAT YOUR HOUSE LOOKED LIKE WHEN WE LEFT IT.

NO KIDDING.

HEART OF CANDRACAR, TAKE US HOME TO HEATHERFIELD.

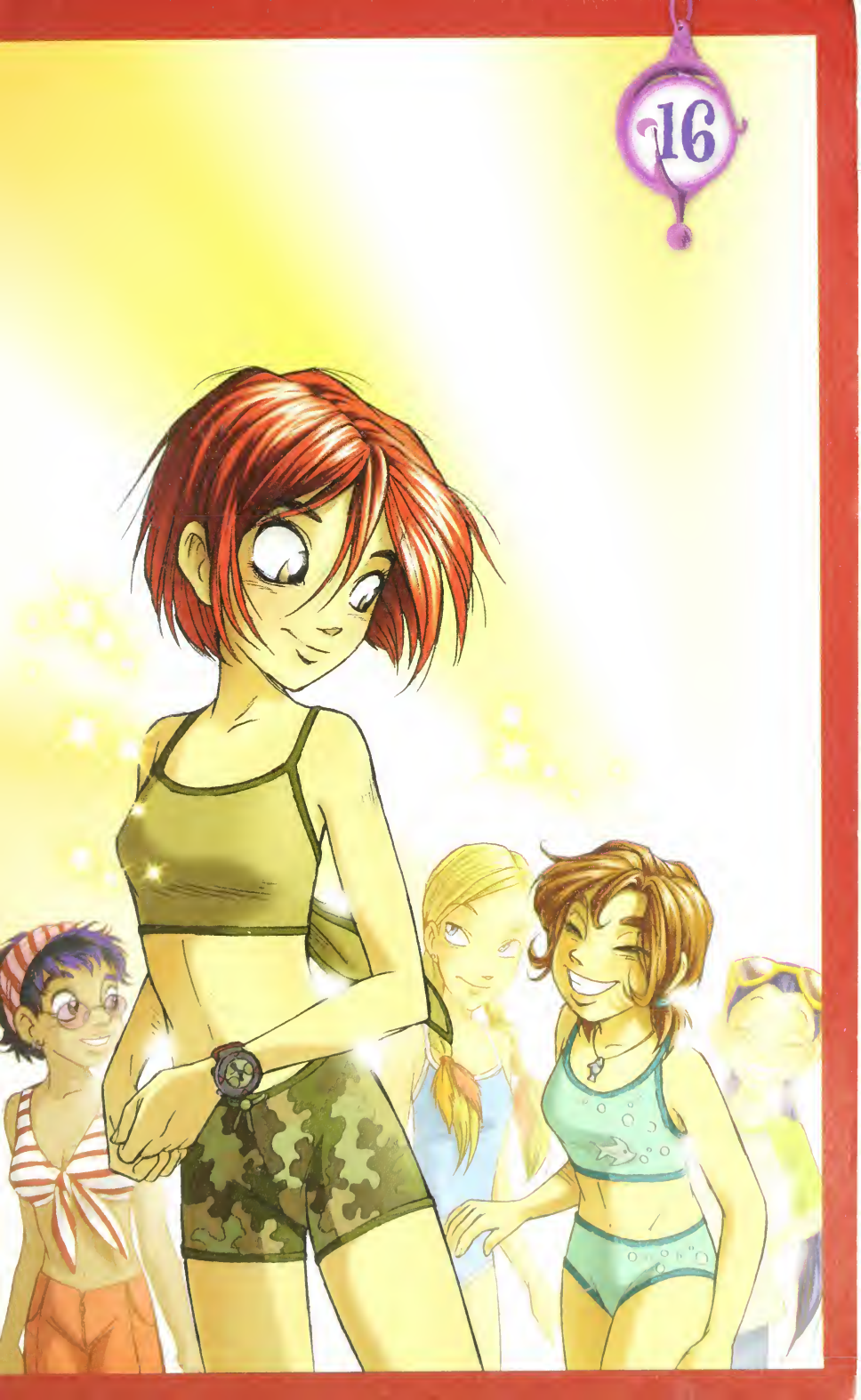
KZZZZZZZ
KZZZZZZZZZZAP
AWESOME! IT WORKED!
AND LOOK! NO TIME HAS PASSED SINCE WE LEFT.
WHICH MEANS, I'VE ONLY GOT 45 MINUTES TO GET HOME!
AND MY PARENTS COULD GET BACK ANY MINUTE NOW.
I SAY WE JUST CALL UP A PROFESSIONAL CLEANING STAFF AND GO GET SOME REST.
GREAT IDEA, IRMA! AND WHO, EXACTLY, WOULD PAY THEM?
NOBODY. WE'D JUST MAKE THEM DISAPPEAR.
SO LET'S PUT THEM TO GOOD USE.
WE GOT OUR POWERS BACK, IRMA.


SHEFFIELD INSTITUTE, THE NEXT DAY
Sheffield Institute
AFTER NINE MONTHS OF CLASSES, THE SCHOOL YEAR IS ALMOST OVER . . . AND SOME BIG NEWS HAS BEEN ANNOUNCED.
THE GRADES HAVE BEEN POSTED.
I FLUNKED?! THIS . . . THIS IS AN OUTRAGE. I'M GOING TO PROTEST.
IT MIGHT BE WISER TO SPEND SOME MORE TIME STUDYING.
WELL, IT'S TIME. ARE YOU PREPARED TO LEARN YOUR FATE?
NOT REALLY. BUT I THINK IT'S A LITTLE TOO LATE TO TURN BACK NOW, DON'T YOU?

HERE GOES. WISH ME LUCK, CORNELIA.
HEY, THERE.
DON'T WORRY. IT'LL BE FINE; YOU'LL SEE.
WHAT IS GOING ON? AM I DREAMING, OR IS THIS A NEW NIGHTMARE?
GIVEN WHO'S INVOLVED, I'D PUT MONEY ON "A NIGHTMARE."
HI . . . UM . . . WE DIDN'T SEE YOU COMING.
I . . . I WAS JUST NOTICING THAT THIS PRETTY GIRL HERE IS USING A NEW PERFUME.
NOW THAT SHE'S GOT A BOYFRIEND, SHE'S OVERDOING IT ON THE AMOUNT.
HEE-HEE-HEE!
HA-HA-HA!
SO, ARE YOU READY FOR THE ULTIMATE CHALLENGE? READY TO SEE THE GRADES?
HONESTLY, IS ANYONE EVER READY FOR STUFF LIKE THIS?
WHY DON'T WE JUST HAVE ONE OF US GO AND LOOK FOR EVERYONE?
AFTER WHAT YOU ALL DID FOR ME, IT'S THE LEAST I CAN DO.
FINE. BUT WHATEVER YOU DO, BREAK IT TO ME GENTLY.

WE ALL PASSED OUR FINALS!
YESSS! ARE WE COMPLETE GENIUSES OR WHAT?
YIPPEE!
VACATION, HERE WE COME!
DO ANY OF US HAVE TO DO SUMMER SCHOOL?
FRENCH FOR WILL.
I KNEW IT WAS TOO GOOD TO BE TRUE.
. . . AND MATH, LITERATURE, AND BIOLOGY FOR IRMA. GO ON, I KNOW THAT'S WHAT YOU ARE GOING TO SAY.
WELL, YOU'RE NOT A VERY GOOD MIND READER, THEN.
ONLY MATH AND BIOLOGY.
WHAT? I'M FLABBERGASTED! AMAZED! DUMBFOUNDED!
WELL, WHEN YOU'RE DONE WITH YOUR LIST OF ADJECTIVES, YOU CAN COUNT ON ME FOR HELP WITH MATH . . .
HEY THERE, BABY BEAR!
HI!
?!
EXCUSE ME . . . BABY BEAR?
IS THERE SOMETHING YOU WANT TO TELL US?
I . . . UM . . . WELL . . . IT'S A LONG STORY!

"BUT I'M SURE SOMEDAY SOON YOU'LL FIND OUT ALL ABOUT IT!"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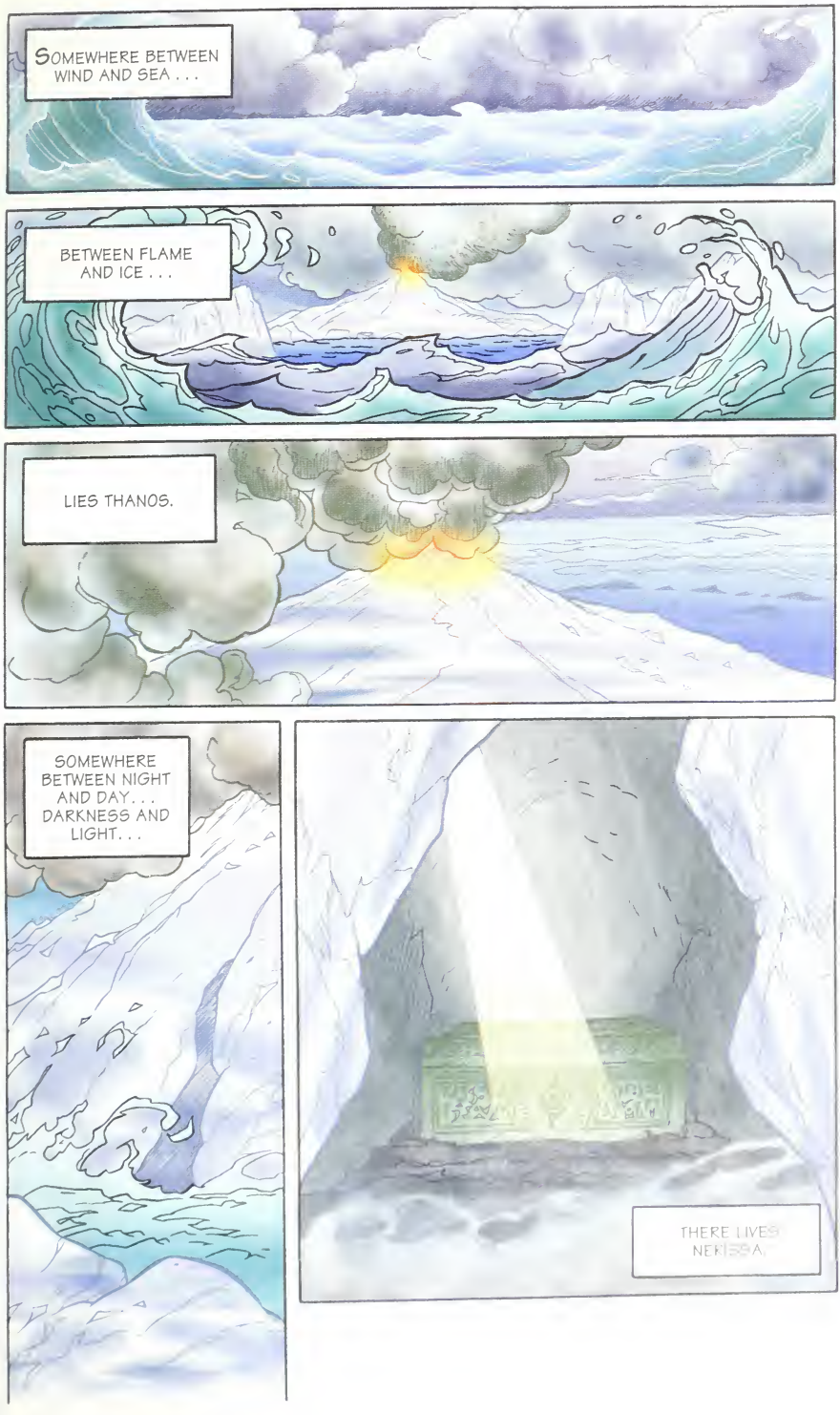
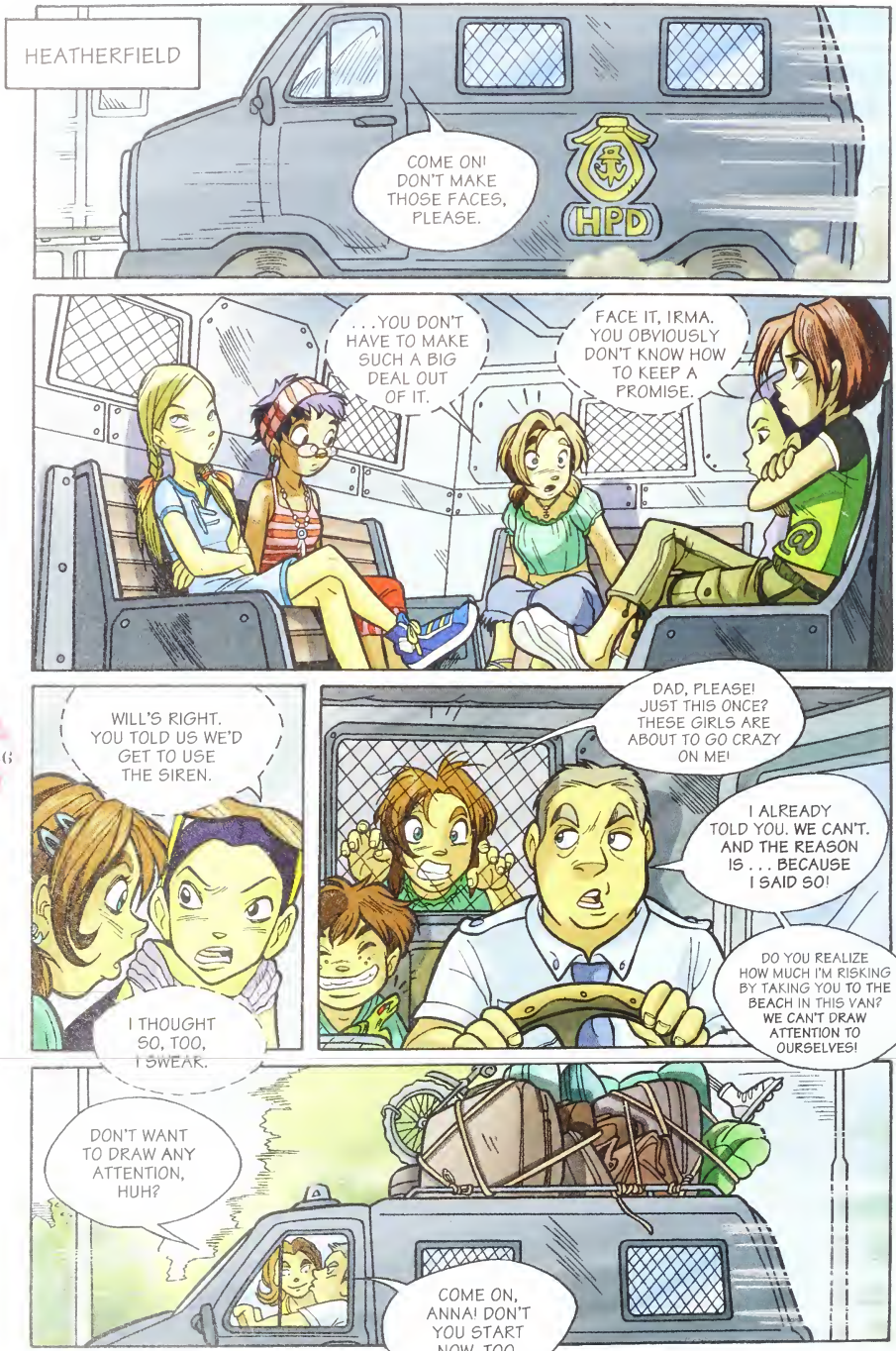
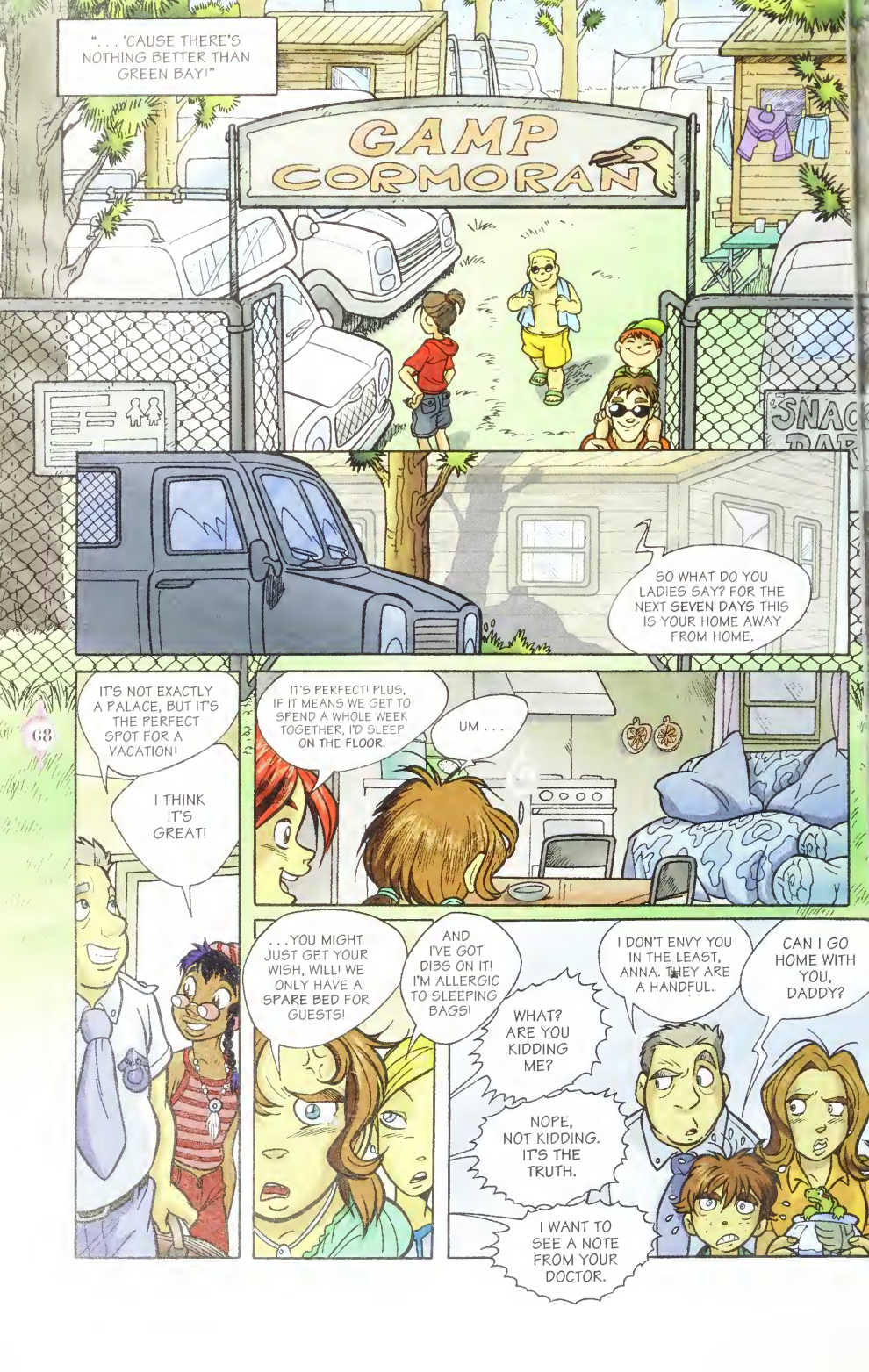

SOMEWHERE BETWEEN WIND AND SEA . . .
BETWEEN FLAME AND ICE . . .
LIES THANOS.
SOMEWHERE BETWEEN NIGHT AND DAY . . . DARKNESS AND LIGHT . . .
THERE LIVES NERISSA.

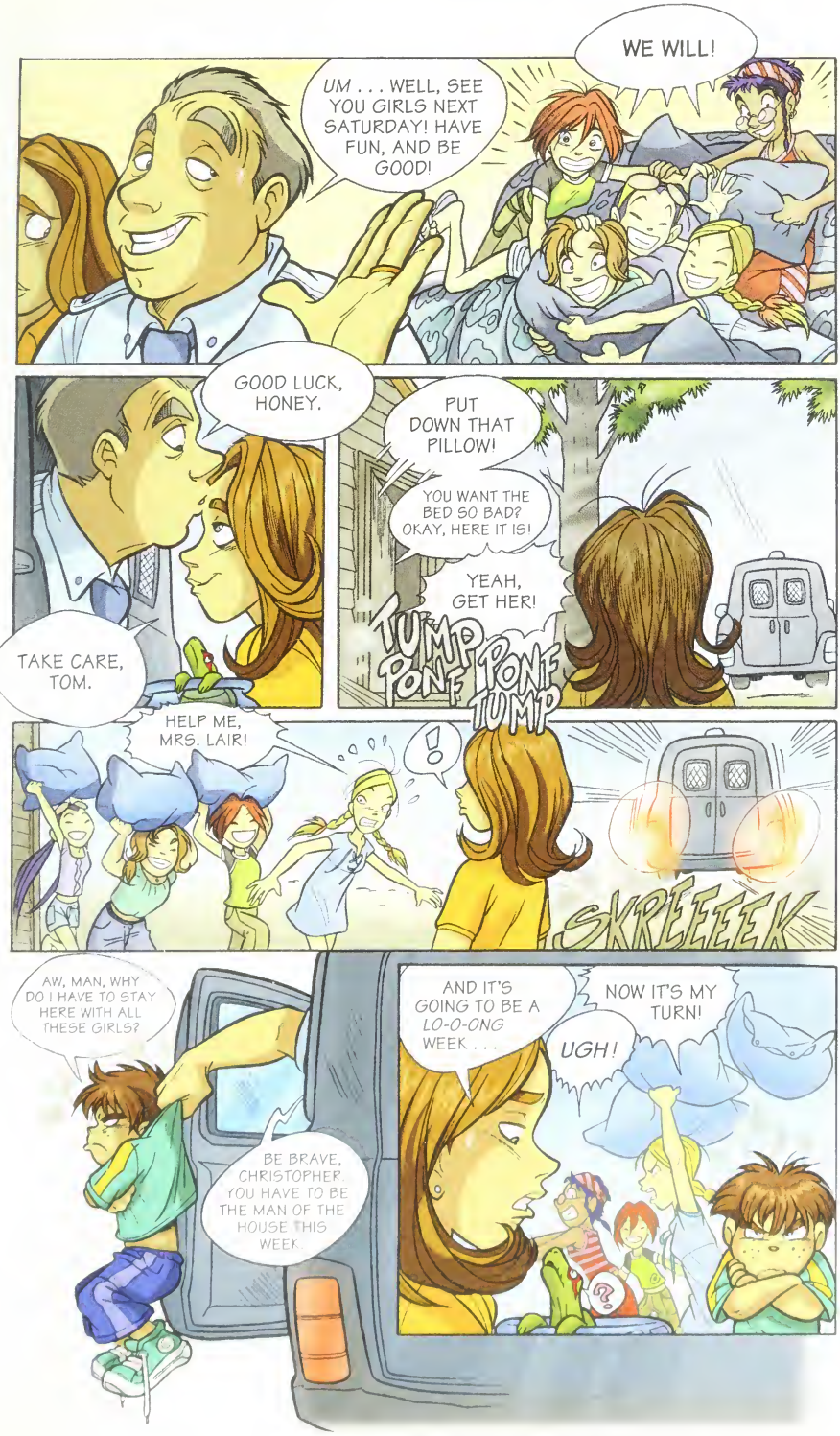
FOR CENTURIES, NO LIVING CREATURE HAS WALKED UPON THE DUSTY FLOOR OF THIS CAVE . . .
. . . YET TODAY IS A NEW DAY.
THE ANIMAL WILL NEVER BE ABLE TO TELL ANYONE THE STORY OF WHAT HE SAW.
AND EVEN IF HE COULD, THERE ARE NO WORDS TO DESCRIBE IT.
KRRKRRRRKKK
GRRRR

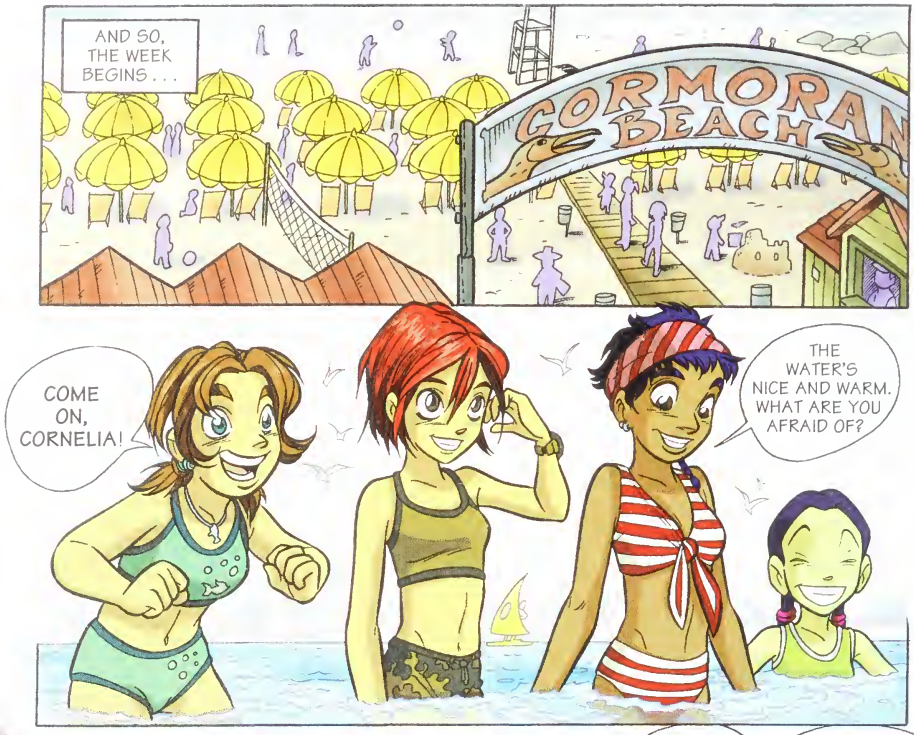
WHIMPER!
THUMP
THUD
PLOP
HMMM . . .
THIS . . . THIS IS THE
SMELL OF AIR!
I . . . COUGH . . .
BREATHE . . . I . . .
COUGH . . . COUGH . . .
. . . I AM ALIVE!

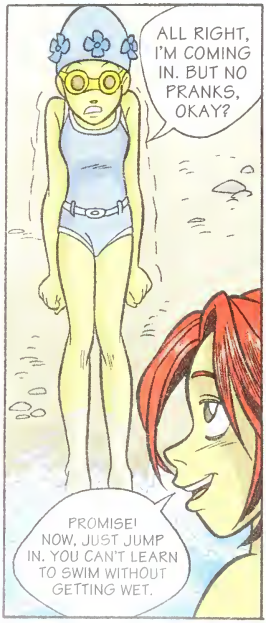

HEATHERFIELD
COME ON! DON'T MAKE THOSE FACES, PLEASE.
HPD
. . . YOU DON'T HAVE TO MAKE SUCH A BIG DEAL OUT OF IT.
FACE IT, IRMA. YOU OBVIOUSLY DON'T KNOW HOW TO KEEP A PROMISE.
WILL'S RIGHT. YOU TOLD US WE'D GET TO USE THE SIREN.
I THOUGHT SO, TOO, I SWEAR.
DAD, PLEASE! JUST THIS ONCE? THESE GIRLS ARE ABOUT TO GO CRAZY ON ME!
I ALREADY TOLD YOU. WE CAN'T. AND THE REASON IS . . . BECAUSE I SAID SO!
DO YOU REALIZE HOW MUCH I'M RISKING BY TAKING YOU TO THE BEACH IN THIS VAN? WE CAN'T DRAW ATTENTION TO OURSELVES!
DON'T WANT TO DRAW ANY ATTENTION, HUH?
COME ON, ANNA! DON'T YOU START NOW, TOO.

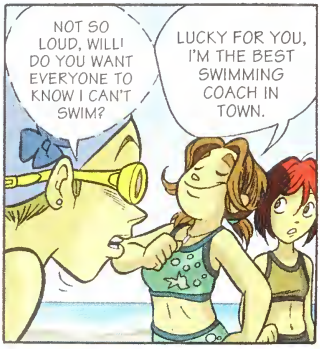
PLEEEEEEAAASE!
ALL RIGHT! ALL RIGHT! IF YOU'LL JUST STOP WHINING. BUT JUST FOR TEN SECONDS!
IF I END UP LOSING MY BADGE, AT LEAST I'LL KNOW WHOM TO BLAME.
CLICK
PLAY
WEEU-WEEEE
YAY!
CHECK IT OUT! LOOK HOW FAST WE'RE GOING!
AT THIS RATE, WE'LL BE ON THE BEACH IN AN HOUR.
WEEEEEO-
I'M GLAD DAD'S CAR WAS AT THE SHOP. THE POLICE VAN IS WAY BETTER.
WELL, I WOULDN'T CALL IT CLASSY OR ANYTHING.
THINK ABOUT IT— THEY USE THIS TO TAKE PEOPLE TO JAIL!
WHO CARES? RIGHT NOW, IT'S JUST TAKING US TO A MUCH BETTER PLACE . . .


". . . 'CAUSE THERE'S NOTHING BETTER THAN GREEN BAY!"
CAMP CORMORAN
SNAC
SO WHAT DO YOU LADIES SAY? FOR THE NEXT SEVEN DAYS THIS IS YOUR HOME AWAY FROM HOME.
IT'S NOT EXACTLY A PALACE, BUT IT'S THE PERFECT SPOT FOR A VACATION!
I THINK IT'S GREAT!
IT'S PERFECT! PLUS, IF IT MEANS WE GET TO SPEND A WHOLE WEEK TOGETHER, I'D SLEEP ON THE FLOOR.
UM . . .
. . . YOU MIGHT JUST GET YOUR WISH, WILL! WE ONLY HAVE A SPARE BED FOR GUESTS!
AND I'VE GOT DIBS ON IT! I'M ALLERGIC TO SLEEPING BAGS!
WHAT? ARE YOU KIDDING ME?
NOPE, NOT KIDDING. IT'S THE TRUTH.
I WANT TO SEE A NOTE FROM YOUR DOCTOR.
I DON'T ENVY YOU IN THE LEAST, ANNA. THEY ARE A HANDFUL.
CAN I GO HOME WITH YOU, DADDY?


WE WILL!
UM . . . WELL, SEE YOU GIRLS NEXT SATURDAY! HAVE FUN, AND BE GOOD!
GOOD LUCK, HONEY.
TAKE CARE, TOM.
PUT DOWN THAT PILLOW!
YOU WANT THE BED SO BAD? OKAY, HERE IT IS!
YEAH, GET HER!
TUMP PONF PONF TUMP
HELP ME, MRS. LAIR!
!
SKREEEEK
AW, MAN, WHY DO I HAVE TO STAY HERE WITH ALL THESE GIRLS?
BE BRAVE, CHRISTOPHER. YOU HAVE TO BE THE MAN OF THE HOUSE THIS WEEK.
AND IT'S GOING TO BE A LO-O-ONG WEEK . . .
UGH!
NOW IT'S MY TURN!

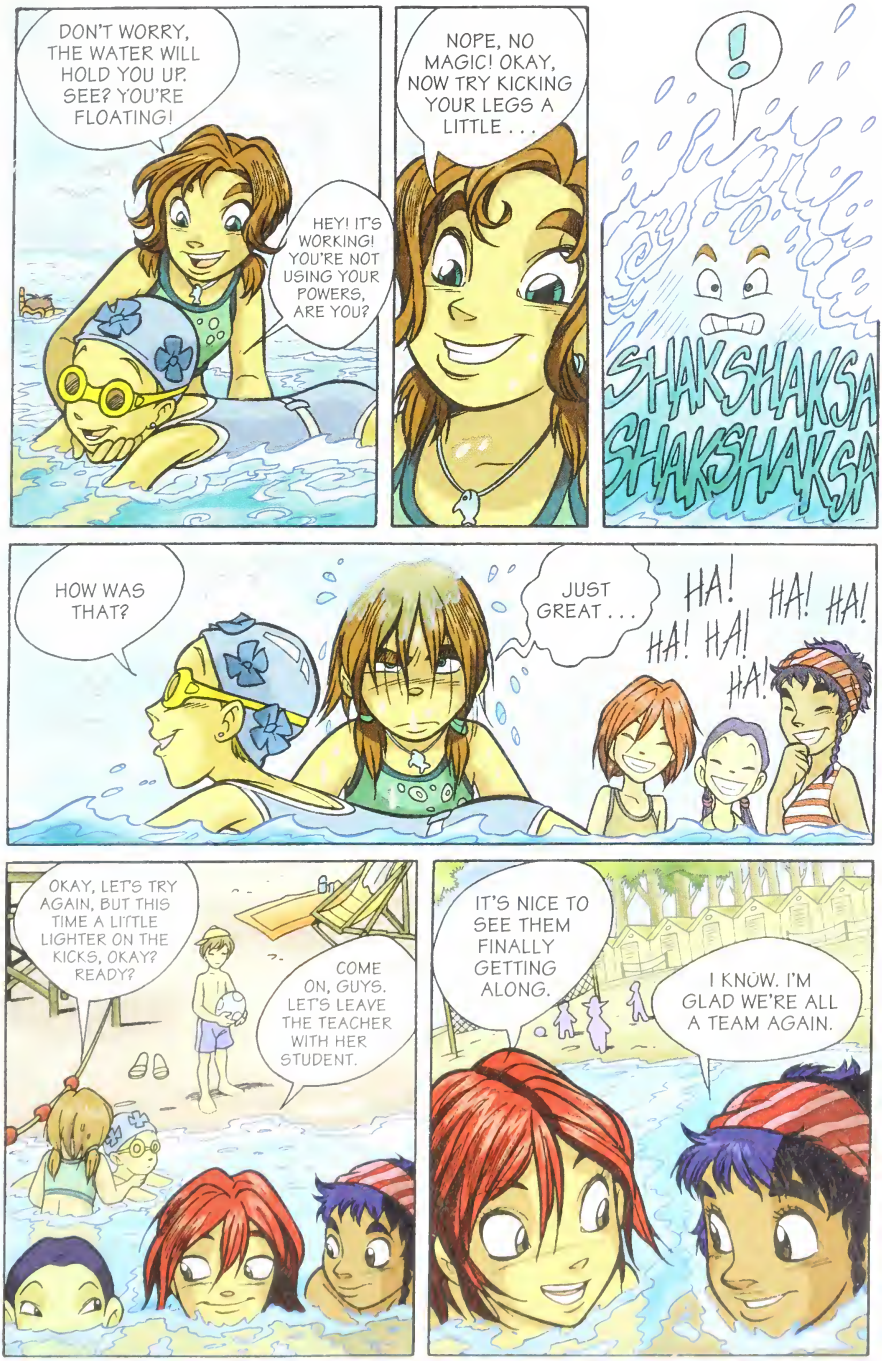

AND SO, THE WEEK BEGINS . . .
GORMORAN BEACH
COME ON, CORNELIA!
THE WATER'S NICE AND WARM. WHAT ARE YOU AFRAID OF?


ALL RIGHT, I'M COMING IN. BUT NO PRANKS, OKAY?
PROMISE! NOW, JUST JUMP IN. YOU CAN'T LEARN TO SWIM WITHOUT GETTING WET.


NOT SO LOUD, WILL! DO YOU WANT EVERYONE TO KNOW I CAN'T SWIM?
LUCKY FOR YOU, I'M THE BEST SWIMMING COACH IN TOWN.

MUST BE A REALLY SMALL TOWN . . .
WATCH IT, CORNY! DON'T FORGET, YOU'RE IN MY TERRITORY NOW.

OKAY, OKAY. LET'S JUST GET THIS OVER WITH.
THAT'S THE SPIRIT. OKAY, NOW JUST RELAX, AND LEAN FORWARD.

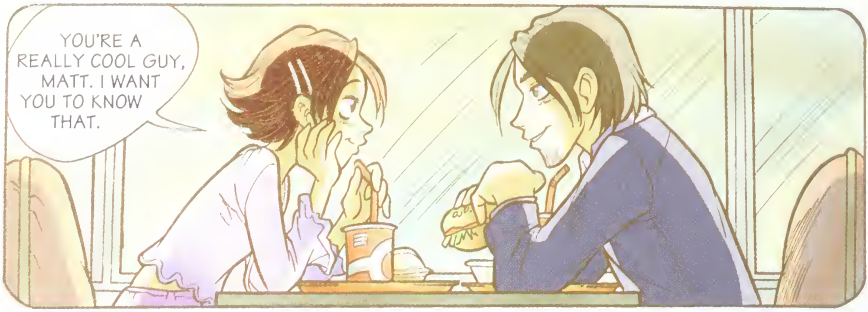

DON'T WORRY, THE WATER WILL HOLD YOU UP. SEE? YOU'RE FLOATING!
HEY! IT'S WORKING! YOU'RE NOT USING YOUR POWERS, ARE YOU?
NOPE, NO MAGIC! OKAY, NOW TRY KICKING YOUR LEGS A LITTLE . . .
!
SHAKSHAKSA
SHAKSHAKSA
HOW WAS THAT?
JUST GREAT . . .
HA! HA! HA! HA! HA! HA!
OKAY, LET'S TRY AGAIN, BUT THIS TIME A LITTLE LIGHTER ON THE KICKS, OKAY? READY?
COME ON, GUYS. LET'S LEAVE THE TEACHER WITH HER STUDENT.
IT'S NICE TO SEE THEM FINALLY GETTING ALONG.
I KNOW. I'M GLAD WE'RE ALL A TEAM AGAIN.

YEAH. LET'S JUST HOPE IT LASTS ALL WEEK.
HA-HA-HA!
SHAKSHAKSHA!
I DON'T KNOW ABOUT YOU, BUT I WISH THIS MOMENT COULD LAST FOREVER.
I HAVEN'T FELT THIS GOOD FOR A LONG TIME.
EVERYTHING SEEMS TO FINALLY BE WORKING OUT.
THINGS ARE FINE AT HOME. MY GRADES ARE OKAY AT SCHOOL.
AND WHAT ABOUT MATT?
YES! WHAT ABOUT MATT?
LOOKS LIKE WE GOT HERE JUST IN TIME, CORNY. WE ALMOST MISSED ALL THE JUICY DETAILS.

I THINK WE'VE WAITED LONG ENOUGH TO FIND OUT WHAT HAPPENED THAT NIGHT AT THE LODELYDAY.
TRUST ME, GUYS, I'VE TOLD YOU ALL THERE IS TO TELL.
I DON'T KNOW . . . I'M NOT BUYING IT.
ME, EITHER. COME ON, WILL, SPILL IT.
OKAY, OKAY, I'LL TALK! YOU GUYS ARE SO NOSY. . .
IT STARTED OUT REALLY GREAT. . .
WILL, YOU LOOK BEAUTIFUL!
THANKS, MATT.
"I WAS SO NERVOUS. THE LODELYDAY WAS REALLY FANCY. THE DECOR, THE MUSIC, THE MAÎTRE D' . . . IT WAS LIKE BEING IN A MOVIE."
I LOOKED AROUND AND THOUGHT, WHAT AM I DOING HERE?
EATING, OF COURSE! IT'S A RESTAURANT.
PLEASE IGNORE HER . . . GO ON.

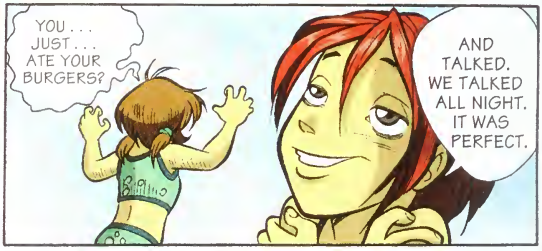
"IT WAS A LITTLE AWKWARD AT FIRST. WE JUST SAT THERE, SMILING AT EACH OTHER. I COULDN'T THINK OF ANYTHING TO SAY, SO I JUST STARED AT THE MENU."
"EVERYTHING WAS WRITTEN IN FRENCH, OR SOME OTHER LANGUAGE. I PRETENDED TO READ IT, BUT I KEPT STEALING GLANCES AT MATT . . ."
LODEEN DAY MENU
THEN MATT LOOKED UP FROM HIS MENU AND SAID . . .
WHAT? WHAT DID HE SAY?
UM . . . I THINK I FORGOT MY WALLET AT HOME.
!
POOR GUY, HE WAS SO EMBARRASSED. I TOLD HIM THAT THESE THINGS HAPPEN, AND . . .
MMMPPF!
HA-HA-HA! HA-HA-HA!
HA-HA-HA! NOW I'VE HEARD IT ALL.
"THESE THINGS HAPPEN!" HA-HA-HA!
!
I KNEW I SHOULDN'T HAVE SAID ANYTHING. GO AHEAD, LAUGH IT UP.
WE'RE SORRY, WILL. PLEASE, TELL US HOW IT ENDED . . .

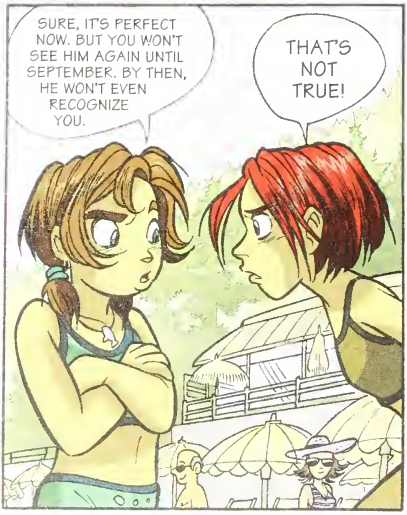
WELL, I ENDED UP INVITING HIM TO DINNER. AFTER ALL, WE STILL HADN'T EATEN . . .
Golden
I SWEAR I'LL PAY YOU BACK EVERY CENT. I'M SUPPOSED TO BE THE ONE TAKING YOU OUT.
FORGET ABOUT IT. YOU CAN PAY NEXT TIME— AT THE LODELYDAY, OF COURSE . . .
I'M GLAD TO KNOW THERE'LL BE A NEXT TIME . . .
AFTER WHAT HAPPENED TONIGHT, I FIGURED YOU WOULDN'T WANT TO GO OUT WITH ME AGAIN.
ARE YOU KIDDING?
I THINK YOU'RE GREAT, MATT. I'D DEFINITELY LIKE TO SEE YOU AGAIN.
GOOD. BECAUSE I WASN'T SURE. YOU'VE SEEMED A LITTLE . . . DISTRACTED LATELY . . .
I KNOW, LIFE'S BEEN KIND OF CRAZY.
. . . BUT I THINK EVERYTHING'S FINALLY WORKING OUT NOW.
I'M GLAD TO HEAR THAT.


YOU'RE A REALLY COOL GUY, MATT. I WANT YOU TO KNOW THAT.

AND THEN?
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?

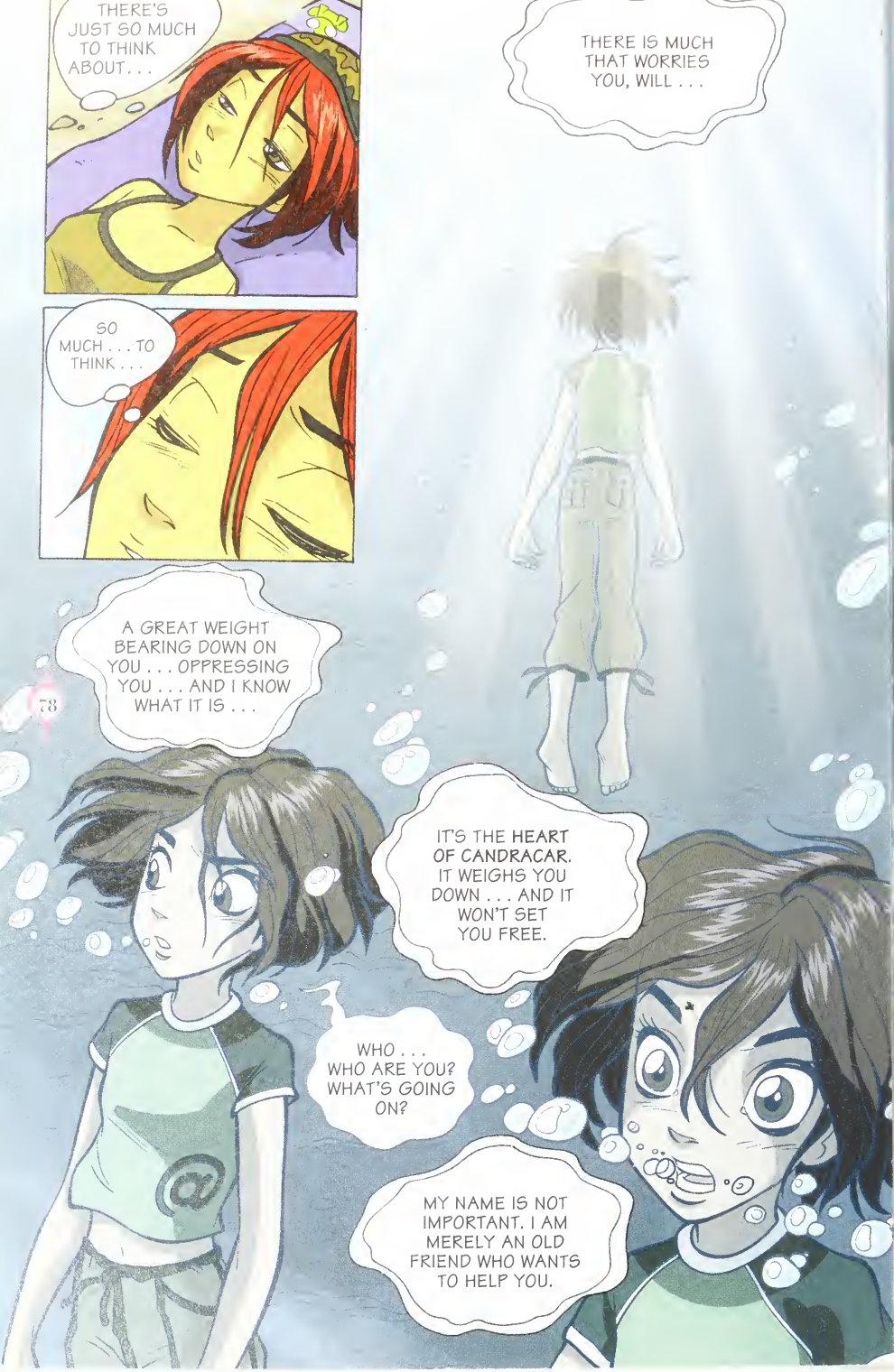
YOU KNOW WHAT WE MEAN! DID HE ASK YOU TO BE HIS GIRLFRIEND? DID YOU GUYS KISS?
NO, WE JUST ATE OUR BURGERS. WE WERE REALLY HUNGRY.


YOU . . . JUST . . . ATE YOUR BURGERS?
AND TALKED. WE TALKED ALL NIGHT. IT WAS PERFECT.

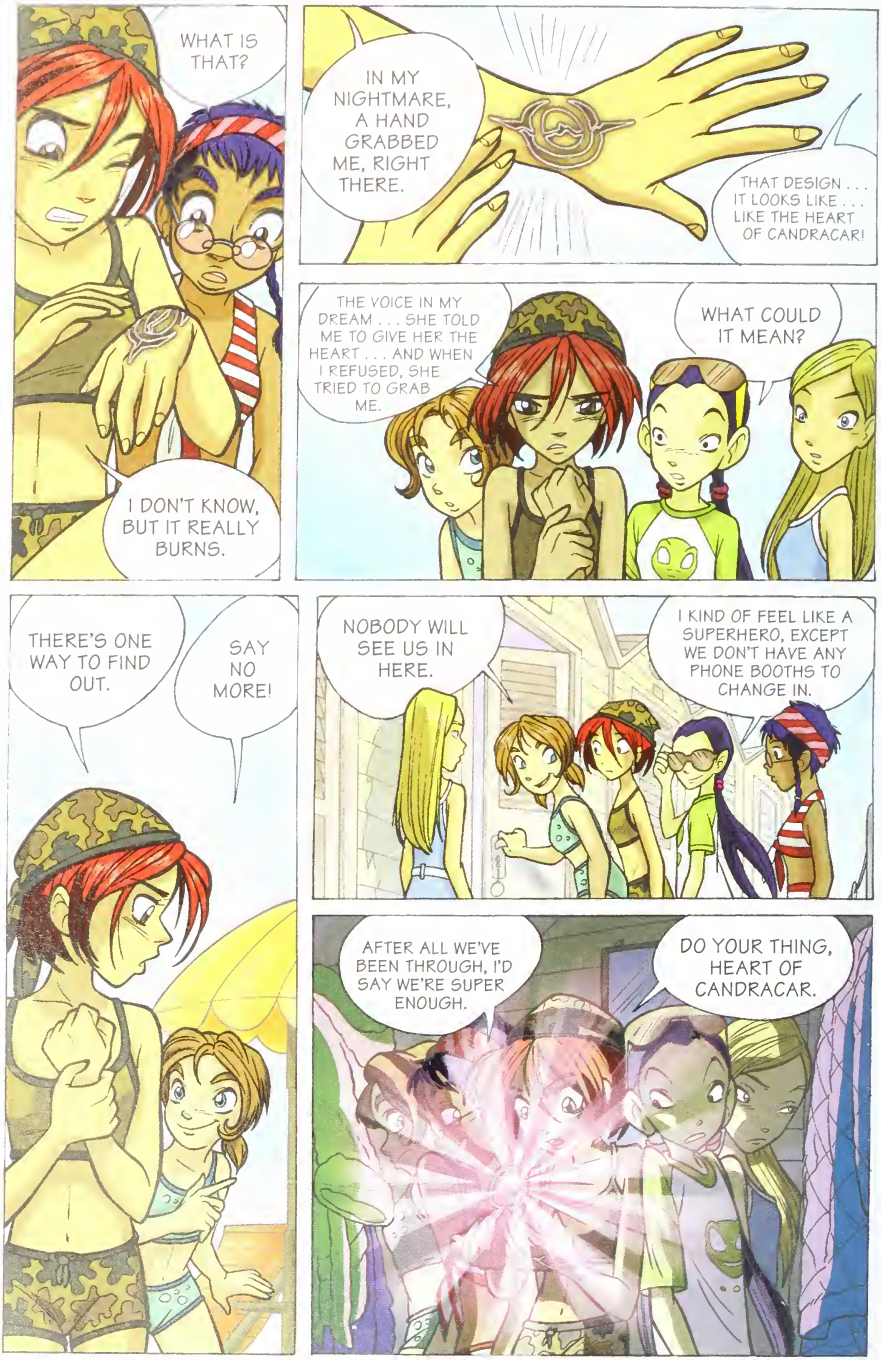

SURE, IT'S PERFECT NOW. BUT YOU WON'T SEE HIM AGAIN UNTIL SEPTEMBER. BY THEN, HE WON'T EVEN RECOGNIZE YOU.
THAT'S NOT TRUE!

WE'LL KEEP IN TOUCH OVER THE SUMMER. IT'LL JUST BE A LITTLE BREAK, THAT'S ALL.
WILL YOU GUYS TALK SOME SENSE INTO HER? HOW CAN YOU HAVE A BREAK IF YOU'VE NEVER EVEN REALLY GONE OUT?

WHILE YOU'RE DREAMING ABOUT SEPTEMBER, MATT'S GOING TO MEET ANOTHER GIRL.
WE'LL SEE ABOUT THAT. NOT EVERYONE THINKS LIKE YOU DO, IRMA.
OKAY, I THINK IT'S TIME FOR AN ICE-CREAM BREAK! WE NEED TO COOL OFF.
MAYBE LATER, CORNELIA. I'M JUST GOING TO LIE IN THE SUN FOR A BIT.
ARE YOU MAD ABOUT WHAT I SAID?
NO, IRMA, IT'S OKAY.
YOU SURE?
TOTALLY SURE!
IRMA'S PROBABLY RIGHT. I LIKE MATT, BUT DOES HE FEEL THE SAME WAY ABOUT ME?
I SAW WHAT HAPPENED BETWEEN CORNELIA AND CALEB. TALK ABOUT A TOUGH RELATIONSHIP!
NOT TO MENTION MY LITTLE SECRET ABOUT BEING A GUARDIAN. I HATE HAVING TO LIE TO HIM.


THERE'S JUST SO MUCH TO THINK ABOUT . . .
SO MUCH . . . TO THINK . . .
THERE IS MUCH THAT WORRIES YOU, WILL . . .
A GREAT WEIGHT BEARING DOWN ON YOU . . . OPPRESSING YOU . . . AND I KNOW WHAT IT IS . . .
IT'S THE HEART OF CANDRACAR. IT WEIGHS YOU DOWN . . . AND IT WON'T SET YOU FREE.
WHO . . . WHO ARE YOU? WHAT'S GOING ON?
MY NAME IS NOT IMPORTANT. I AM MERELY AN OLD FRIEND WHO WANTS TO HELP YOU.

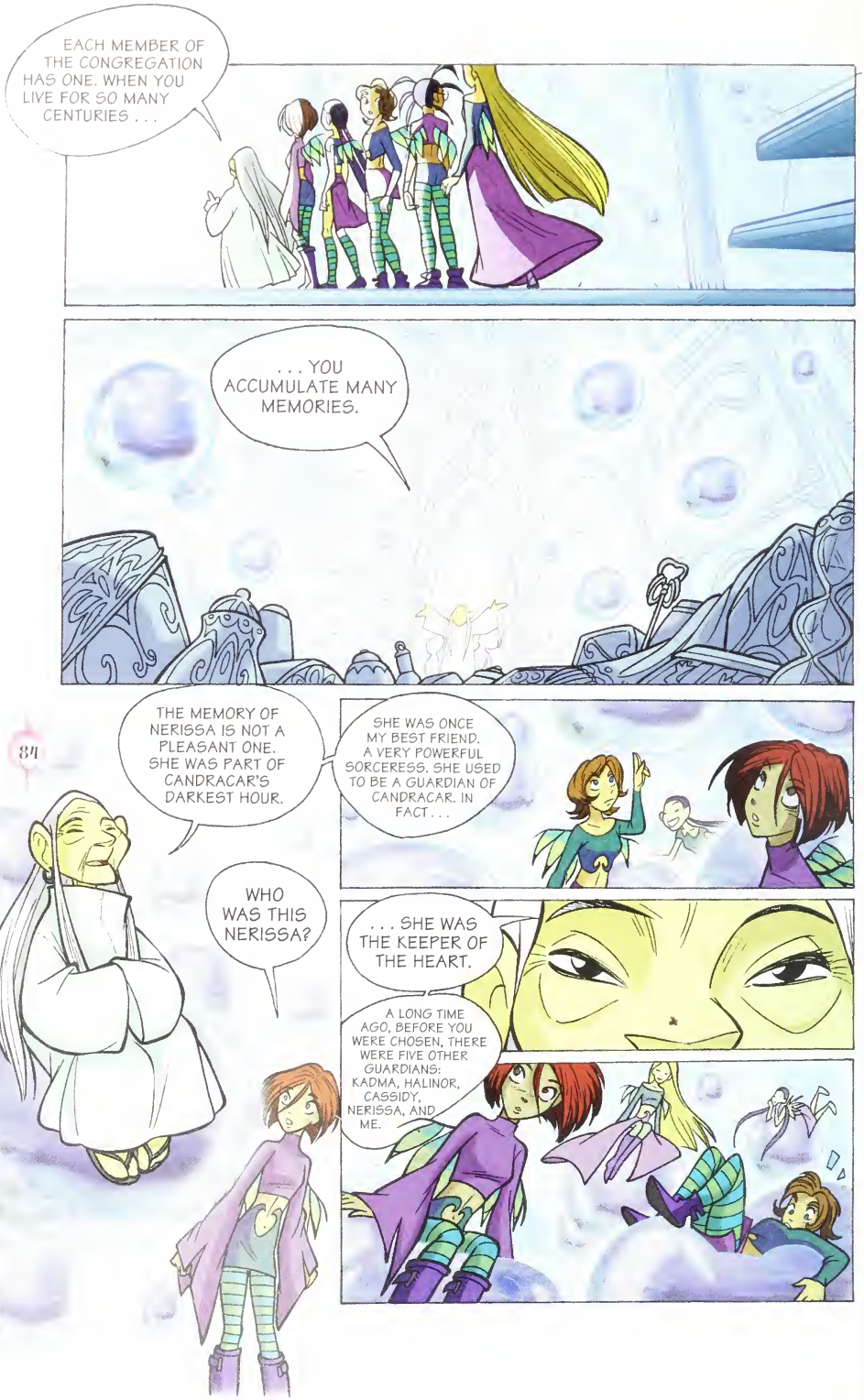
GIVE THE HEART TO ME, WILL. LET ME HELP YOU WITH YOUR BURDEN . . .
FREE YOURSELF FROM THE WORRY, THE SUFFERING . . .
I—I CAN'T. I WON'T!
GIVE IT TO ME, WILL!
NO! LET GO!
WILL? IS EVERYTHING OKAY?
I JUST HAD THIS CRAZY NIGHTMARE. IT ALL SEEMED SO . . .
. . . SO REAL!
GASP!


WHAT IS THAT?
I DON'T KNOW, BUT IT REALLY BURNS.
IN MY NIGHTMARE, A HAND GRABBED ME, RIGHT THERE.
THAT DESIGN . . . IT LOOKS LIKE . . . LIKE THE HEART OF CANDRACAR!
THE VOICE IN MY DREAM . . . SHE TOLD ME TO GIVE HER THE HEART . . . AND WHEN I REFUSED, SHE TRIED TO GRAB ME.
WHAT COULD IT MEAN?
THERE'S ONE WAY TO FIND OUT.
SAY NO MORE!
NOBODY WILL SEE US IN HERE.
I KIND OF FEEL LIKE A SUPERHERO, EXCEPT WE DON'T HAVE ANY PHONE BOOTHS TO CHANGE IN.
AFTER ALL WE'VE BEEN THROUGH, I'D SAY WE'RE SUPER ENOUGH.
DO YOUR THING, HEART OF CANDRACAR.

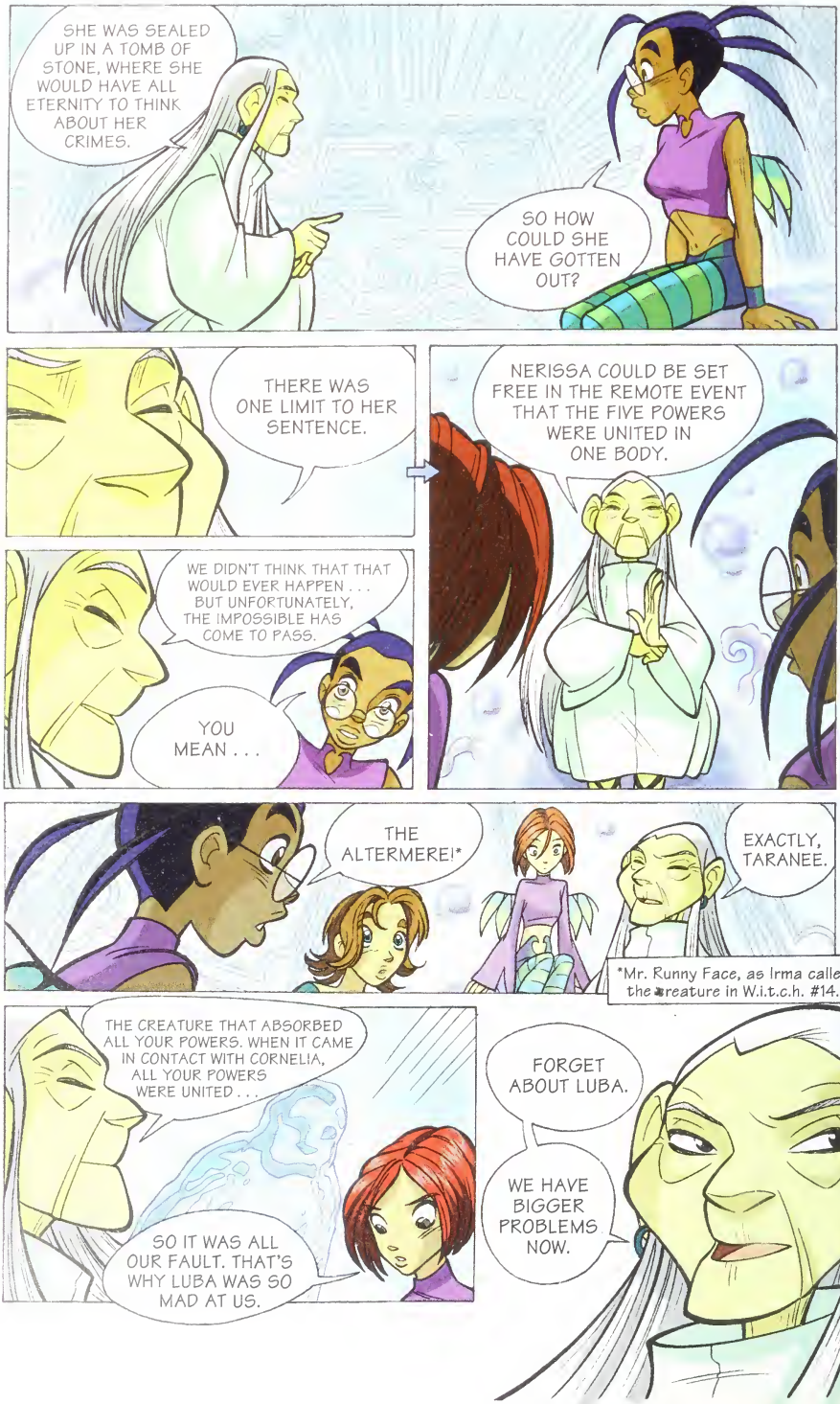
"YOU KNOW, THIS PLACE IS STARTING TO BECOME OUR HOME AWAY FROM HOME."
A STRANGE DREAM, INDEED, WILL. COME, LET US TALK MORE IN HERE.
WOW, THIS IS SO COOL.
IT LOOKS JUST LIKE MY BEDROOM.
SURE, IRMA, EXCEPT THERE ARE NO POSTERS ON THESE WALLS.
AND IT'S ABOUT TEN TIMES AS BIG.
HA-HA-HA!
LET ME SEE THE DESIGN, WILL.
WHAT DO YOU THINK IT COULD BE?
OH, NO! THEN IT'S TRUE!
?!

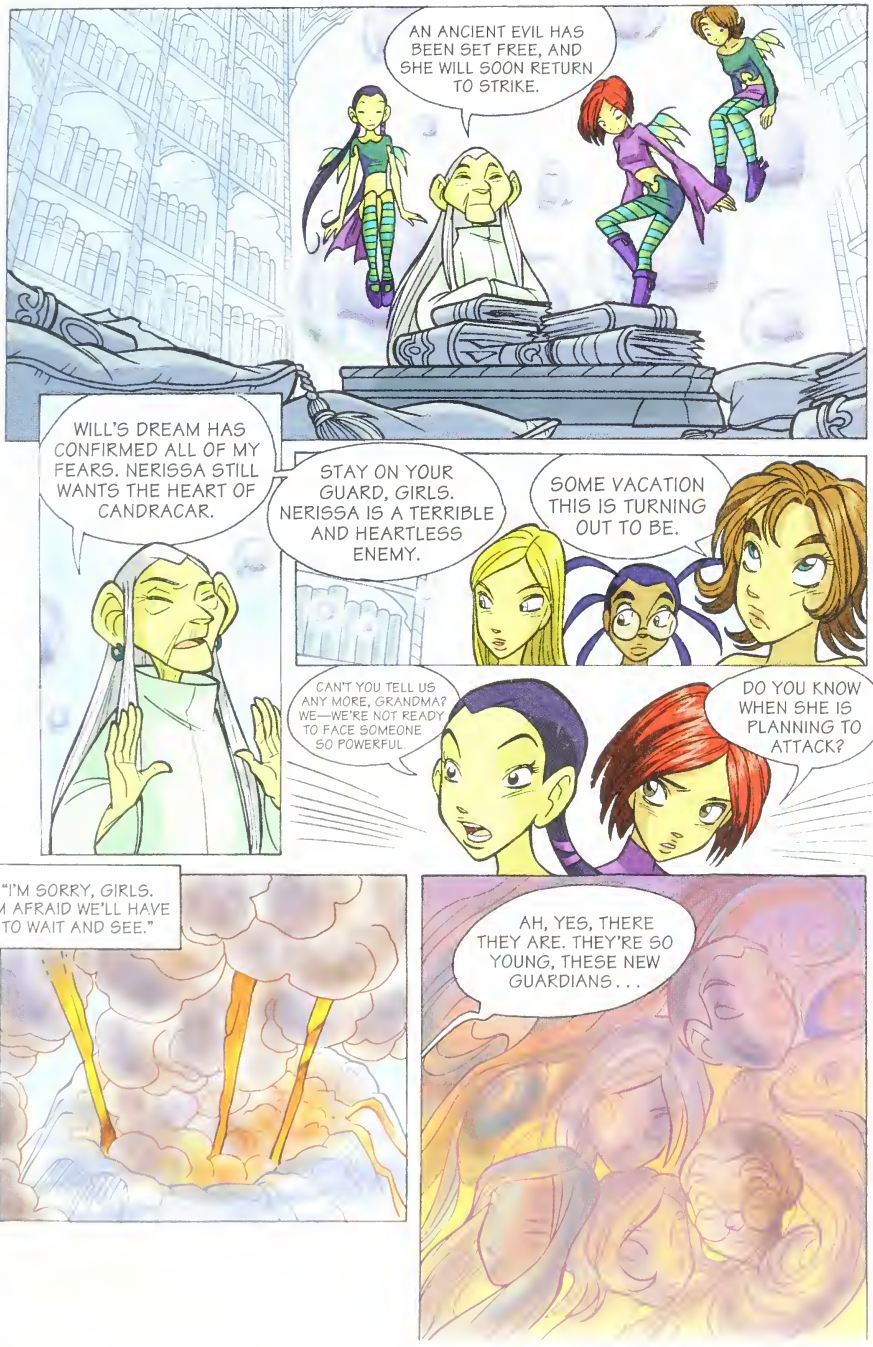
GRANDMA? WHAT'S WRONG?
THE ORACLE WARNED ME, BUT I'D ALWAYS HOPED IT WASN'T TRUE.
THE TRAITOR HAS AWOKEN! NERISSA HAS RETURNED!
THIS IS HER MARK.
TELL ME ABOUT YOUR DREAM, WILL. WHAT DID YOU SEE? TELL ME EVERY DETAIL YOU CAN REMEMBER . . .
I—I ALREADY TOLD YOU EVERYTHING.
WHAT'S GOING ON, GRANDMA? WHO IS NERISSA?
AND WHAT DO YOU MEAN SHE'S A TRAITOR?
NERISSA IS AN EVIL SORCERESS, WHOM I BELIEVED WAS CONQUERED FOREVER. IT SEEMS I WAS MISTAKEN.

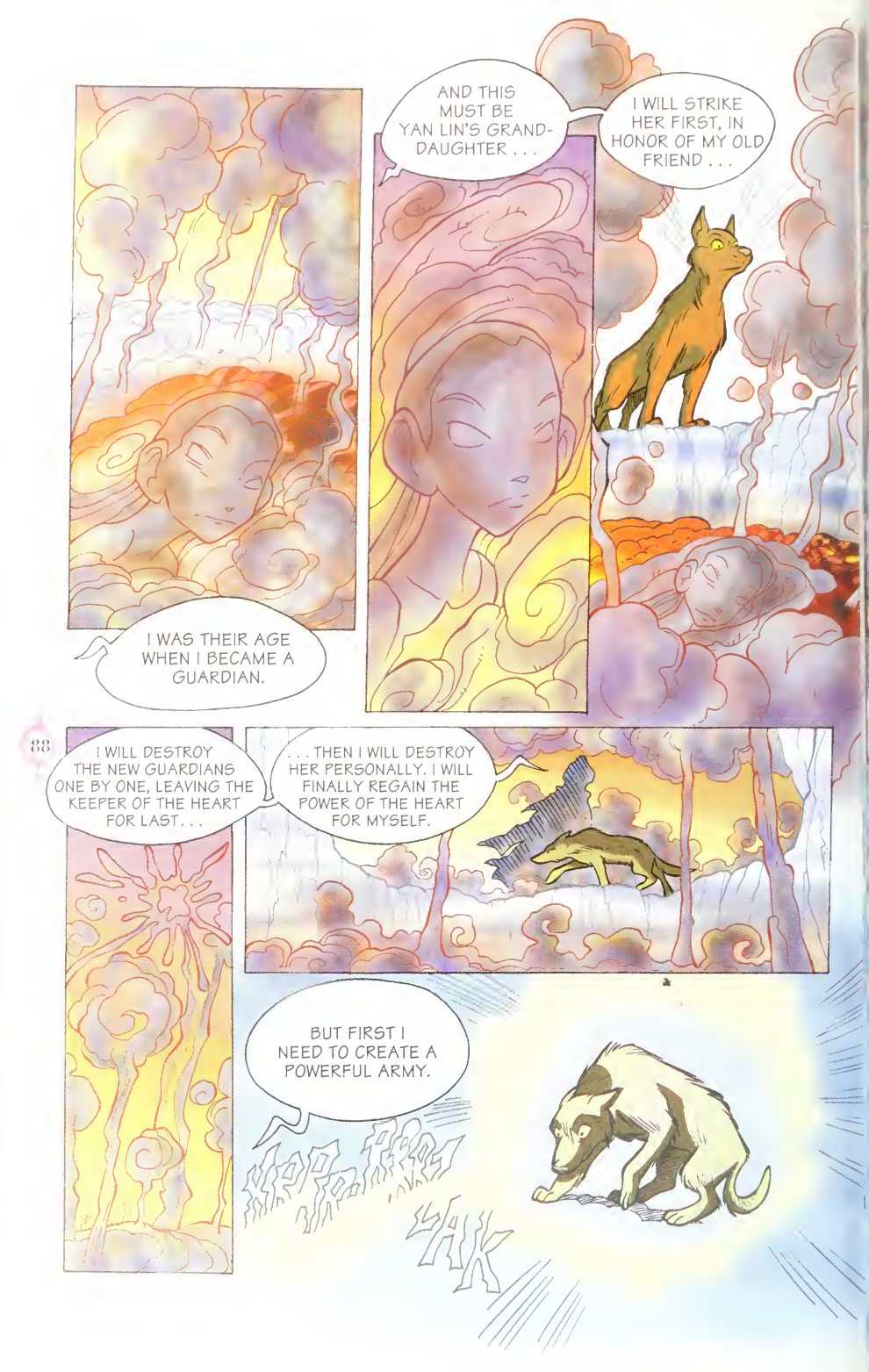
I WAS ONCE FORCED TO BATTLE HER EVIL FORCES . . .
TODAY THIS TASK IS UP TO YOU.
HEY! THE MARK IS GONE.
NO, WILL. IT HAS SIMPLY FOUND A NEW PLACE TO DWELL. PAIN NEVER DISAPPEARS COMPLETELY.
IT HIDES, IT LURKS, ALWAYS WAITING TO DO MORE HARM.
RELAX
PERHAPS THE MOMENT HAS COME FOR YOU TO KNOW MORE. FOLLOW ME.
DOWN THERE? MAYBE WE SHOULD HAVE KEPT OUR SWIMSUITS ON
WOW!
DON'T BE AFRAID. YOU ARE NOW IN MY CHAMBER OF MEMORIES.


EACH MEMBER OF THE CONGREGATION HAS ONE. WHEN YOU LIVE FOR SO MANY CENTURIES . . .
. . . YOU ACCUMULATE MANY MEMORIES.
THE MEMORY OF NERISSA IS NOT A PLEASANT ONE. SHE WAS PART OF CANDRACAR'S DARKEST HOUR.
WHO WAS THIS NERISSA?
SHE WAS ONCE MY BEST FRIEND. A VERY POWERFUL SORCERESS. SHE USED TO BE A GUARDIAN OF CANDRACAR. IN FACT . . .
. . . SHE WAS THE KEEPER OF THE HEART.
A LONG TIME AGO, BEFORE YOU WERE CHOSEN, THERE WERE FIVE OTHER GUARDIANS: KADMA, HALINOR, CASSIDY, NERISSA, AND ME.

LIKE YOU, WE WORKED TOGETHER TO PROTECT THE UNIVERSE FROM EVIL. BUT THEN ONE DAY, NERISSA SUDDENLY CHANGED. SHE DECIDED TO STEAL THE HEART.
SHE'D BECOME CONSUMED BY ITS POWER. THE OTHERS AND I TRIED TO STOP HER . . .
THE BATTLE WAS FIERCE, BUT WE SUCCEEDED. YET THE PRICE WAS HIGH.
CASSIDY, THE YOUNGEST OF THE FIVE, PERISHED IN THE FIGHT.
THE CONGREGATION, LED BY THE ORACLE, SENTENCED NERISSA TO EXILE IN MOUNT THANOS, A DESOLATE PRISON.


SHE WAS SEALED UP IN A TOMB OF STONE, WHERE SHE WOULD HAVE ALL ETERNITY TO THINK ABOUT HER CRIMES.
SO HOW COULD SHE HAVE GOTTEN OUT?
THERE WAS ONE LIMIT TO HER SENTENCE.
NERISSA COULD BE SET FREE IN THE REMOTE EVENT THAT THE FIVE POWERS WERE UNITED IN ONE BODY.
WE DIDN'T THINK THAT THAT WOULD EVER HAPPEN . . . BUT UNFORTUNATELY, THE IMPOSSIBLE HAS COME TO PASS.
YOU MEAN . . .
THE ALTERMERE!*
EXACTLY, TARANEE.
*Mr. Runny Face, as Irma called the creature in W.i.t.c.h. #14.
THE CREATURE THAT ABSORBED ALL YOUR POWERS. WHEN IT CAME IN CONTACT WITH CORNELIA, ALL YOUR POWERS WERE UNITED . . .
SO IT WAS ALL OUR FAULT. THAT'S WHY LUBA WAS SO MAD AT US.
FORGET ABOUT LUBA.
WE HAVE BIGGER PROBLEMS NOW.

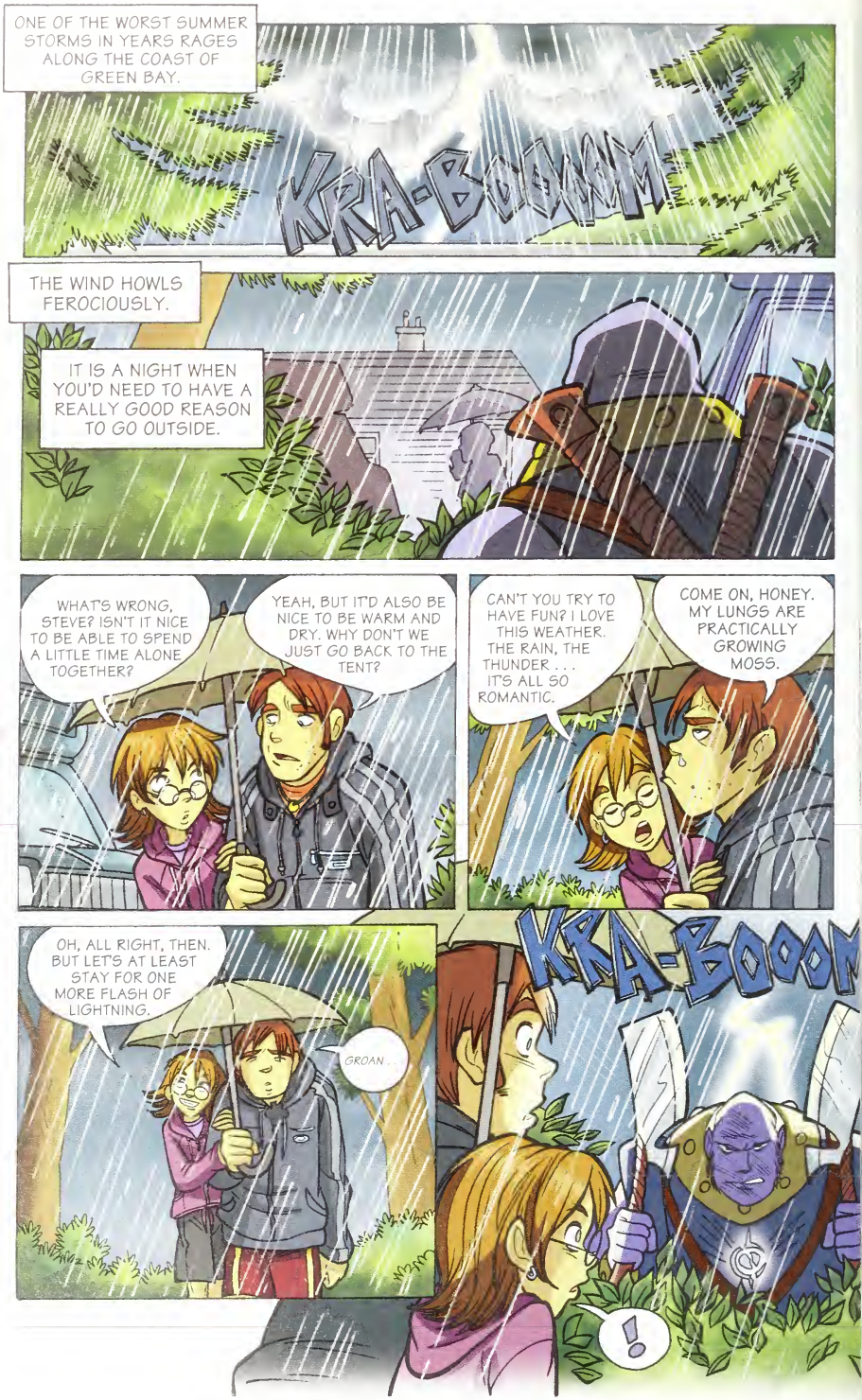

AN ANCIENT EVIL HAS BEEN SET FREE, AND SHE WILL SOON RETURN TO STRIKE.
WILL'S DREAM HAS CONFIRMED ALL OF MY FEARS. NERISSA STILL WANTS THE HEART OF CANDRACAR.
STAY ON YOUR GUARD, GIRLS. NERISSA IS A TERRIBLE AND HEARTLESS ENEMY.
SOME VACATION THIS IS TURNING OUT TO BE.
CAN'T YOU TELL US ANY MORE, GRANDMA? WE—WE'RE NOT READY TO FACE SOMEONE SO POWERFUL
DO YOU KNOW WHEN SHE IS PLANNING TO ATTACK?
"I'M SORRY, GIRLS. I'M AFRAID WE'LL HAVE TO WAIT AND SEE."
AH, YES, THERE THEY ARE. THEY'RE SO YOUNG, THESE NEW GUARDIANS . . .


I WAS THEIR AGE WHEN I BECAME A GUARDIAN.
AND THIS MUST BE YAN LIN'S GRAND-DAUGHTER . . .
I WILL STRIKE HER FIRST, IN HONOR OF MY OLD FRIEND . . .
88
I WILL DESTROY THE NEW GUARDIANS ONE BY ONE, LEAVING THE KEEPER OF THE HEART FOR LAST. . .
. . . THEN I WILL DESTROY HER PERSONALLY. I WILL FINALLY REGAIN THE POWER OF THE HEART FOR MYSELF.
BUT FIRST I NEED TO CREATE A POWERFUL ARMY.
WAK

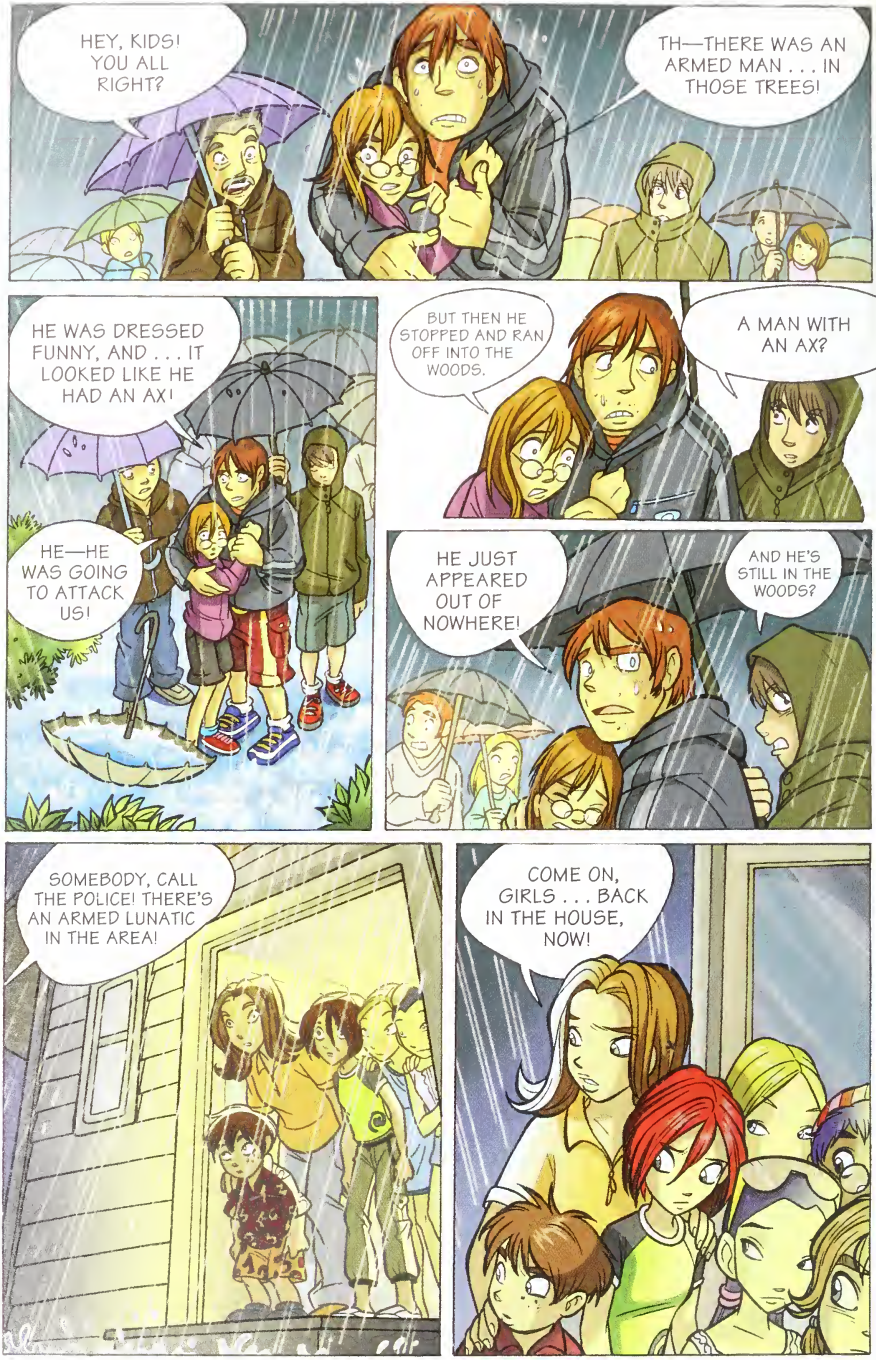
ONE THAT IS CRUEL AND FIERCE. COLD AND RELENTLESS!
ZZZKKK-KKKRZKZZK
ARISE, BEAST. YOU WILL BE THE FIRST OF MY KNIGHTS OF REVENGE!
KRAAAAAKZZZK-RZZZAAAAZZZK
FROM NOW ON, YOU WILL BE KHOR, THE DESTROYER!
NOW GO, KHOR! GO AND WREAK HAVOC . . .
89
WZZZZZKZKZZZZ
. . . IN THE NAME OF NERISSA!
RRRR!
KRR-RRZZZAK

BROOOOM
CAMP CORMORAN
BROOOOM
WAS THAT THUNDER OR JUST YOUR STOMACH?
DON'T WORRY, HAY LIN. IT'S JUST A PASSING SUMMER STORM. TOMORROW YOU'LL HAVE ALL THE SUNSHINE YOU COULD WANT.
BY THE WAY, DINNER WILL BE READY IN FIVE MINUTES.
THANKS, MOM.

I HATE THUNDER-STORMS. THEY GIVE ME THE CREEPS.
I DON'T THINK IT'S THE STORM THAT'S SCARING US.
YEAH, BUT YOU HEARD YAN LIN. ALL WE CAN DO NOW IS WAIT.
DINNERTIME!


ONE OF THE WORST SUMMER STORMS IN YEARS RAGES ALONG THE COAST OF GREEN BAY.
KRA-BOOOM!
THE WIND HOWLS FEROCIOUSLY.
IT IS A NIGHT WHEN YOU'D NEED TO HAVE A REALLY GOOD REASON TO GO OUTSIDE.
WHAT'S WRONG, STEVE? ISN'T IT NICE TO BE ABLE TO SPEND A LITTLE TIME ALONE TOGETHER?
YEAH, BUT IT'D ALSO BE NICE TO BE WARM AND DRY. WHY DON'T WE JUST GO BACK TO THE TENT?
CAN'T YOU TRY TO HAVE FUN? I LOVE THIS WEATHER. THE RAIN, THE THUNDER . . . IT'S ALL SO ROMANTIC.
COME ON, HONEY. MY LUNGS ARE PRACTICALLY GROWING MOSS.
OH, ALL RIGHT, THEN. BUT LET'S AT LEAST STAY FOR ONE MORE FLASH OF LIGHTNING.
GROAN...
KRA-BOOOM!
!

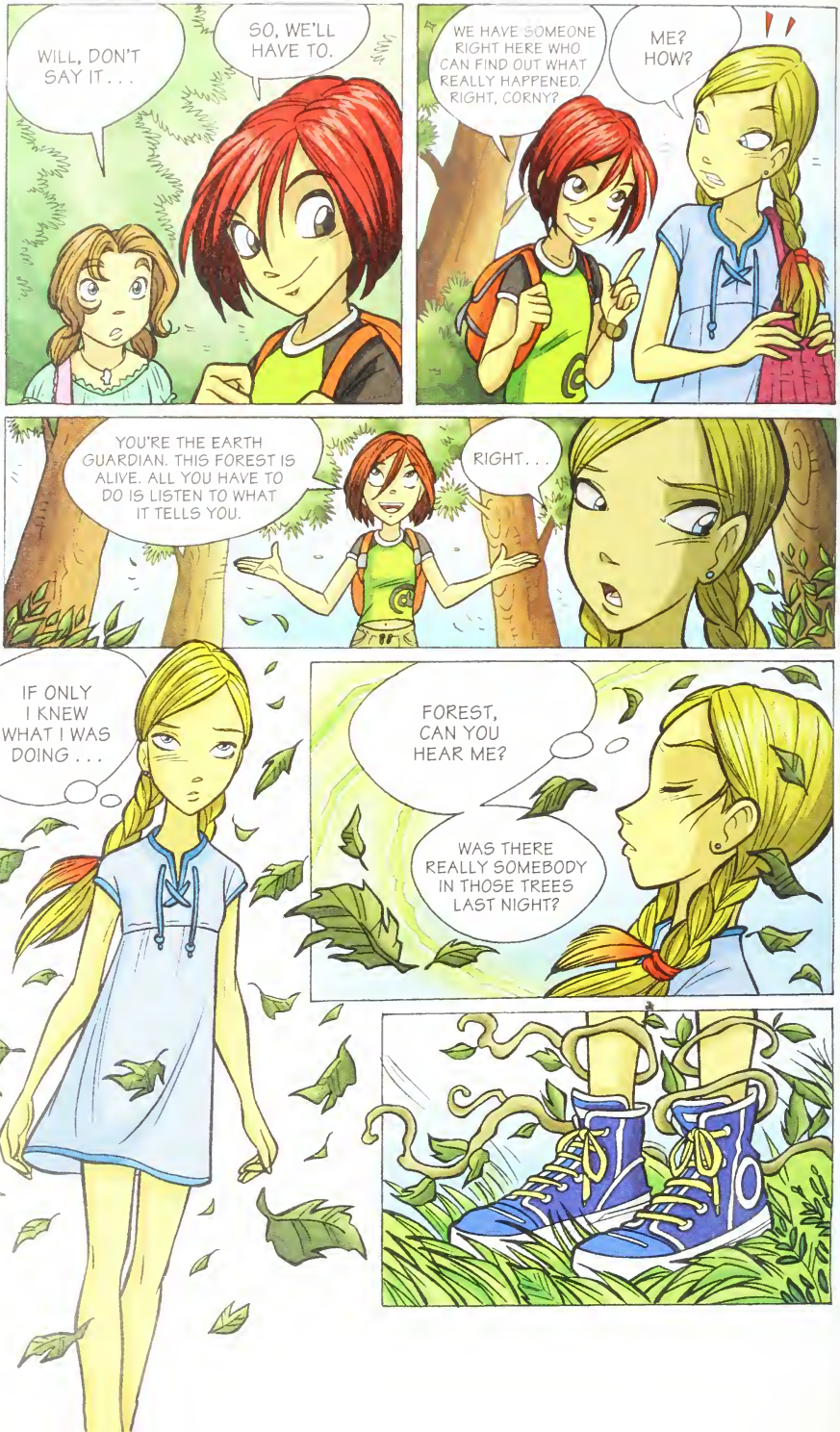
SIX!
HA! THAT PUTS YOU ON MY PROPERTY.
TWO LOUSY MOTELS? I'LL SEE IF I HAVE ANY SPARE CHANGE.
GO AHEAD AND MAKE JOKES, CORNY. I HOPE YOU'RE STILL LAUGHING WHEN THESE MOTELS TAKE ALL YOUR MONEY.
HA-HA-HA!
AAAAAHH!
WHAT WAS THAT?
IT SOUNDED LIKE SOMEONE SCREAMING . . .
HEY, GET BACK HERE! YOU STILL OWE ME MONEY.
WHAT'S GOING ON?
WHO WAS THAT?


HEY, KIDS! YOU ALL RIGHT?
TH—THERE WAS AN ARMED MAN . . . IN THOSE TREES!
HE WAS DRESSED FUNNY, AND . . . IT LOOKED LIKE HE HAD AN AX!
HE—HE WAS GOING TO ATTACK US!
BUT THEN HE STOPPED AND RAN OFF INTO THE WOODS.
A MAN WITH AN AX?
HE JUST APPEARED OUT OF NOWHERE!
AND HE'S STILL IN THE WOODS?
SOMEBODY, CALL THE POLICE! THERE'S AN ARMED LUNATIC IN THE AREA!
COME ON, GIRLS . . . BACK IN THE HOUSE, NOW!

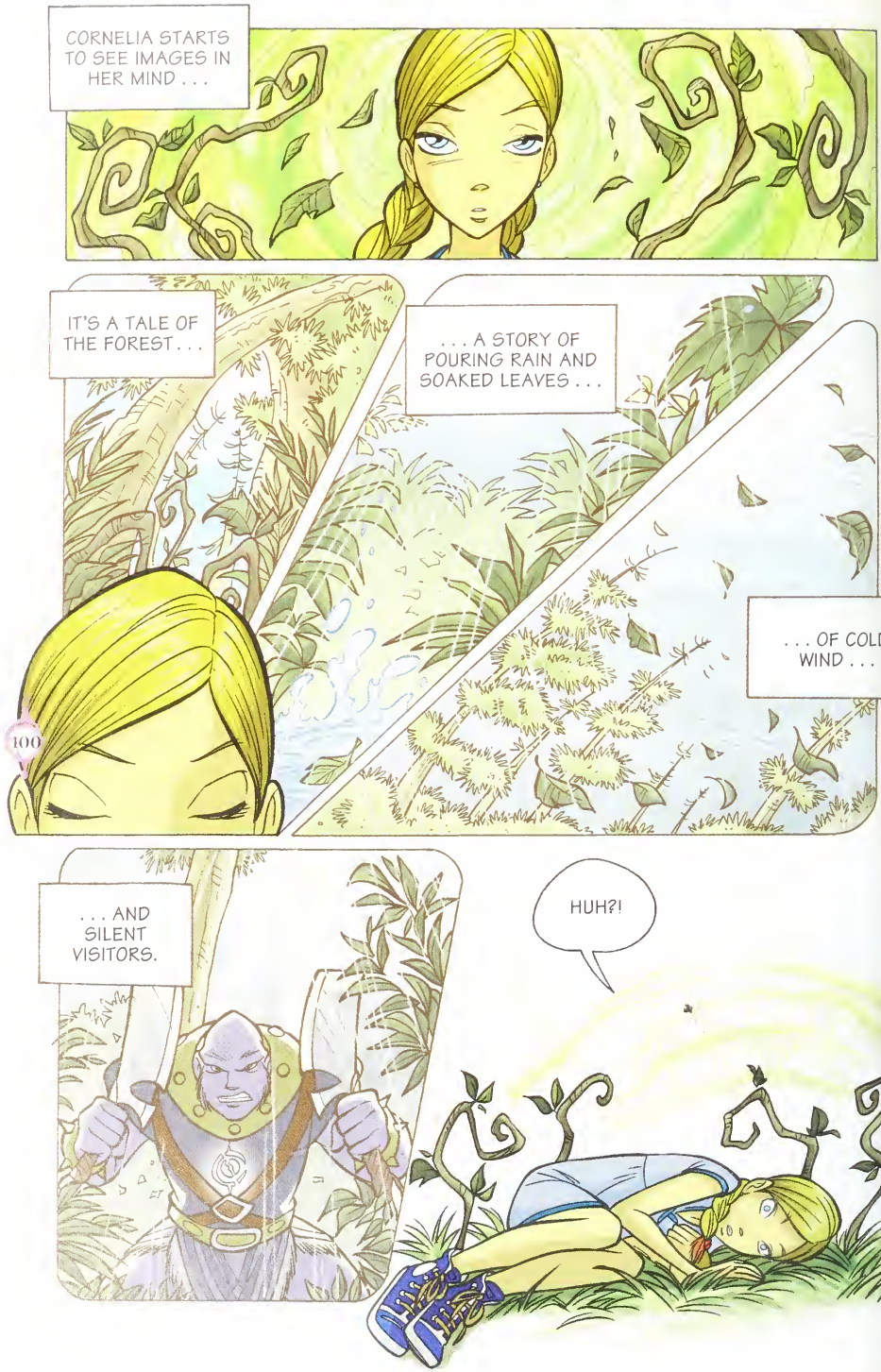
WELL DONE, KHOR! YOU'VE FOUND THEM.
BUT DON'T ATTACK THEM TONIGHT. THIS PLACE IS TOO CROWDED.
A GOOD HUNTER KNOWS HOW TO WAIT. I WILL LET YOU KNOW WHEN THE MOMENT HAS COME.
FOR NOW, FIND A PLACE TO SPEND THE NIGHT...
...AND WAIT FOR MY COMMAND.
KRA-RAAAK

THE NEXT MORNING . . .
I THINK CORNELIA PLANNED THAT WHOLE THING JUST TO AVOID PAYING ME MY MONEY.
I MEAN, COME ON! WHY WOULD A SANE PERSON BE RUNNING IN THE RAIN WITH AN AX?
A SANE PERSON PROBABLY WOULDN'T . . .
BUT THIS GUY SOUNDS LIKE HE MIGHT BE OUT OF HIS MIND!
STILL TALKING ABOUT LAST NIGHT? WHY DON'T YOU GIRLS TRY CHANGING THE SUBJECT?
I'LL SEE YOU ON THE BEACH LATER. AND DON'T FORGET YOUR SUNSCREEN.
THANKS, MRS. LAIR. SEE YOU LATER.
LOOK! THE POLICE ARE HERE.
OKAY, FOLKS, THERE'S NOTHING TO SEE. EVERYTHING'S UNDER CONTROL. MY MEN ARE LOOKING INTO IT.
BUT YOU HAVEN'T EVEN SEARCHED THE AREA. THERE MIGHT STILL BE SOME EVIDENCE.

LAST NIGHT'S RAIN PROBABLY WASHED AWAY ALL THE EVIDENCE.
MAYBE IF YOU'D SHOWN UP RIGHT AWAY, YOU WOULD HAVE CAUGHT THE GUY.
LOOK! I ALREADY TOLD YOU, EVERYTHING'S UNDER CONTROL! GREEN BAY HAS ALWAYS BEEN A PEACEFUL PLACE.
AND THE LATE-NIGHT RAMBLINGS OF TWO KIDS ARE NOT GOING TO CHANGE THAT!
BUT, OFFICER . . .
IT'S THE HEIGHT OF THE SUMMER SEASON, FOLKS. NO NEED TO GO AROUND CREATING UNNECESSARY PANIC.
HE SURE HAS A NASTY TEMPER.
HE SEEMS TO THINK THAT PROTECTING GREEN BAY'S REPUTATION IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN CATCHING THAT NUTCASE.
MAYBE HE'S RIGHT. MAYBE THOSE KIDS JUST IMAGINED EVERYTHING.
MAYBE THEY DID. BUT IT DOESN'T LOOK LIKE SHERLOCK OVER THERE IS MAKING AN EFFORT TO FIND OUT.

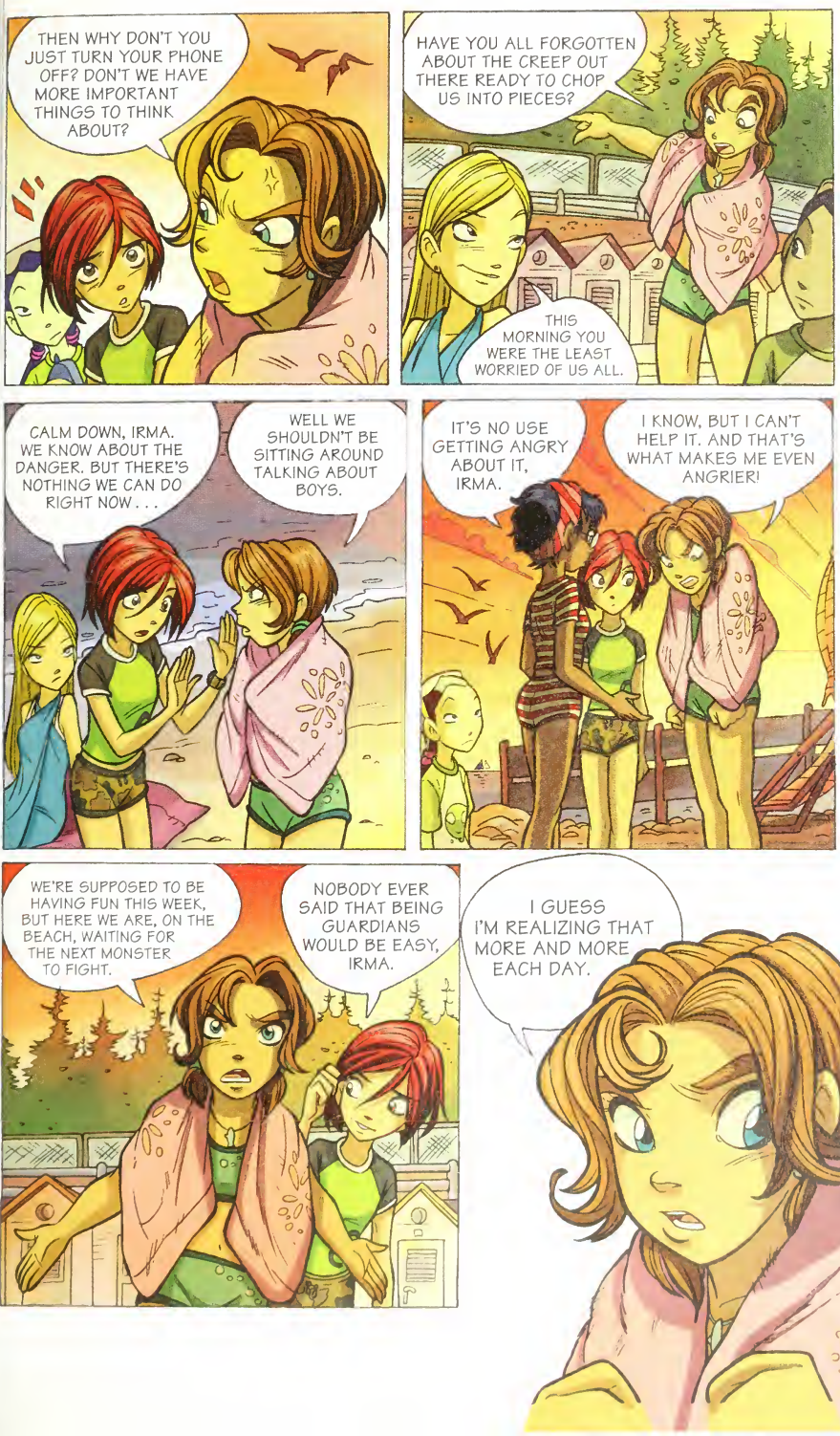

WILL, DON'T SAY IT...
SO, WE'LL HAVE TO.
WE HAVE SOMEONE RIGHT HERE WHO CAN FIND OUT WHAT REALLY HAPPENED. RIGHT, CORNY?
ME? HOW?
YOU'RE THE EARTH GUARDIAN. THIS FOREST IS ALIVE. ALL YOU HAVE TO DO IS LISTEN TO WHAT IT TELLS YOU.
RIGHT...
IF ONLY I KNEW WHAT I WAS DOING...
FOREST, CAN YOU HEAR ME?
WAS THERE REALLY SOMEBODY IN THOSE TREES LAST NIGHT?

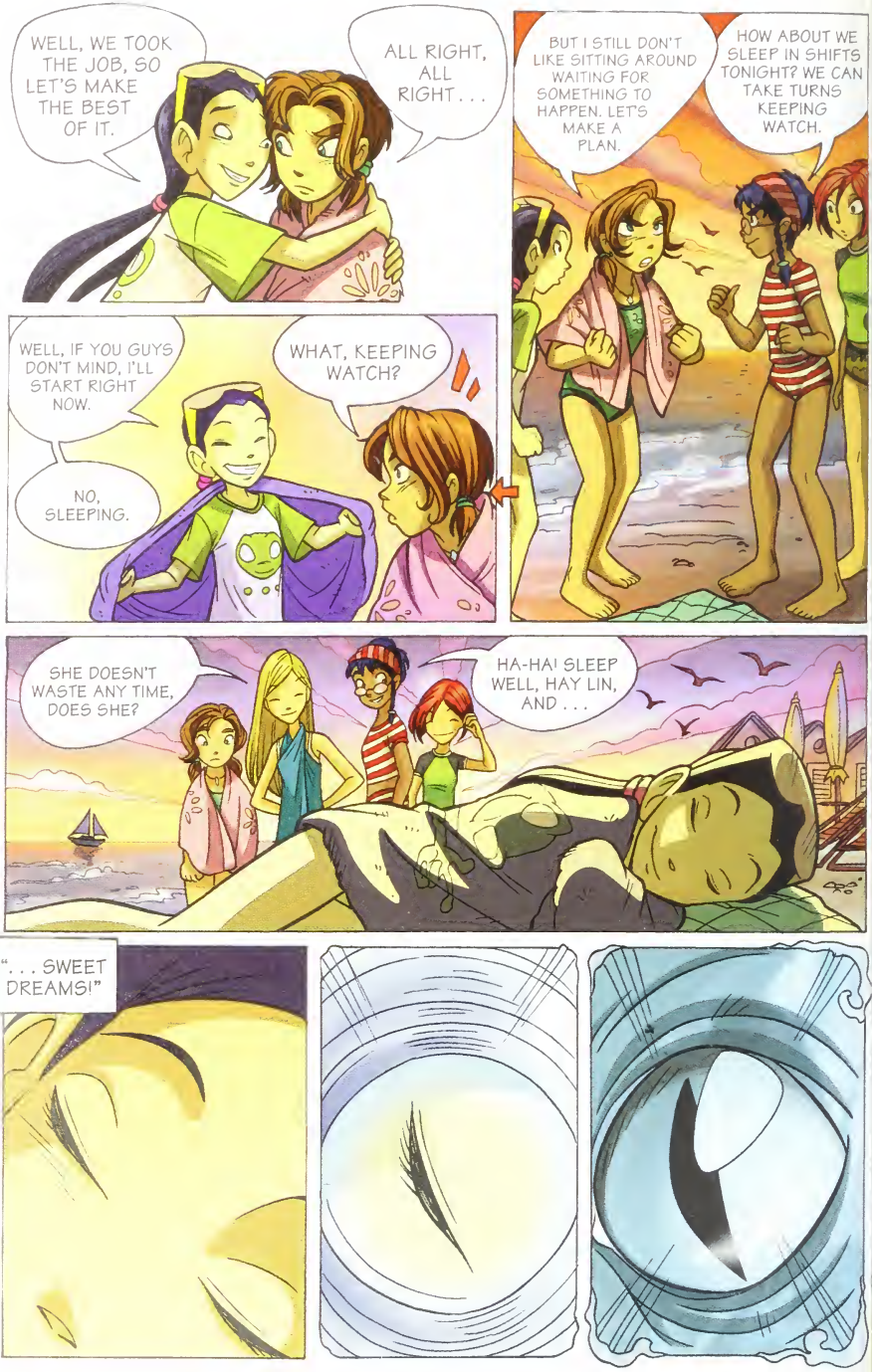
WHA—?
CORNELIA!
NO, WAIT! LET HER CONCENTRATE.
ARE YOU TRYING TO TELL ME SOMETHING? YOU WANT ME TO STAY IN THIS SPOT?
THIS MUST MEAN THAT WHAT I'M LOOKING FOR IS RIGHT HERE.
OKAY, I'M LISTENING.


CORNELIA STARTS TO SEE IMAGES IN HER MIND . . .
IT'S A TALE OF THE FOREST . . .
. . . A STORY OF POURING RAIN AND SOAKED LEAVES . . .
. . . OF COLD WIND . . .
. . . AND SILENT VISITORS.
HUH?!

ARE YOU OKAY, CORNELIA?
YEAH . . . I THINK I'M STILL IN ONE PIECE.
WHAT HAPPENED? DID YOU SEE SOMETHING?
I THINK SO. THOSE KIDS WEREN'T MAKING ANYTHING UP. THERE REALLY WAS A GUY WITH AN AX . . .
WE HAVE TO CALL THE POLICE RIGHT AWAY.
RIGHT . . . AND WHAT DO WE TELL THEM? THAT THE TREES TOLD US?
FORGET THE POLICE. THAT MAN WAS HERE FOR US. HE HAD THAT SAME SYMBOL ON HIS CHEST . . . NERISSA'S SYMBOL!

THE SUN SETS ON ANOTHER DAY AT THE BEACH . . .
BREE BREE BREEEP
ANOTHER TEXT MESSAGE?
YEP, IT'S MATT. HE'S ON THE BEACH, AND HE SAYS HI.
AGAIN? WOW, YOU GUYS HAVE BEEN TEXTING EACH OTHER ALL DAY.
TWELVE TIMES! BUT WHO'S COUNTING?
SOUNDS LIKE IT MIGHT BE SERIOUS.
I TOLD YOU GUYS, WE'RE JUST FRIENDS.


THEN WHY DON'T YOU JUST TURN YOUR PHONE OFF? DON'T WE HAVE MORE IMPORTANT THINGS TO THINK ABOUT?
HAVE YOU ALL FORGOTTEN ABOUT THE CREEP OUT THERE READY TO CHOP US INTO PIECES?
THIS MORNING YOU WERE THE LEAST WORRIED OF US ALL.
CALM DOWN, IRMA. WE KNOW ABOUT THE DANGER. BUT THERE'S NOTHING WE CAN DO RIGHT NOW...
WELL WE SHOULDN'T BE SITTING AROUND TALKING ABOUT BOYS.
IT'S NO USE GETTING ANGRY ABOUT IT, IRMA.
I KNOW, BUT I CAN'T HELP IT. AND THAT'S WHAT MAKES ME EVEN ANGRIER!
WE'RE SUPPOSED TO BE HAVING FUN THIS WEEK, BUT HERE WE ARE, ON THE BEACH, WAITING FOR THE NEXT MONSTER TO FIGHT.
NOBODY EVER SAID THAT BEING GUARDIANS WOULD BE EASY, IRMA.
I GUESS I'M REALIZING THAT MORE AND MORE EACH DAY.


WELL, WE TOOK THE JOB, SO LET'S MAKE THE BEST OF IT.
ALL RIGHT, ALL RIGHT . . .
BUT I STILL DON'T LIKE SITTING AROUND WAITING FOR SOMETHING TO HAPPEN. LET'S MAKE A PLAN.
HOW ABOUT WE SLEEP IN SHIFTS TONIGHT? WE CAN TAKE TURNS KEEPING WATCH.
WELL, IF YOU GUYS DON'T MIND, I'LL START RIGHT NOW.
WHAT, KEEPING WATCH?
NO, SLEEPING.
SHE DOESN'T WASTE ANY TIME, DOES SHE?
HA-HA! SLEEP WELL, HAY LIN, AND . . .
". . . SWEET DREAMS!"

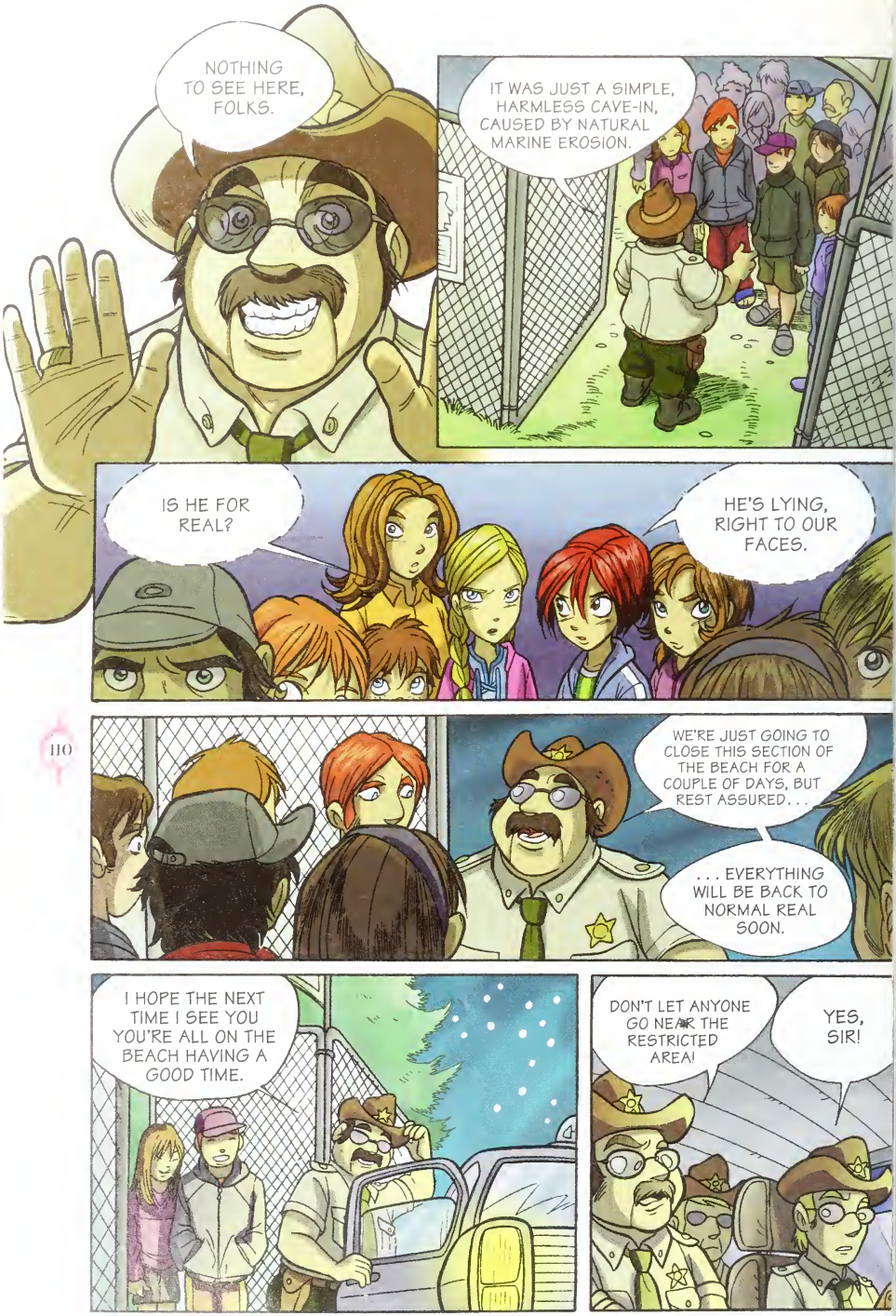
I SEE YOU, HAY LIN . . . EVEN WHEN YOU SLEEP. . . EVEN WHEN YOU DREAM . . .
WHO ARE YOU? WHAT DO YOU WANT FROM ME?
JUST THINK OF ME AS AN OLD FRIEND. I'VE WAITED SO LONG FOR THIS MOMENT . . .
N—NO . . . THIS . . . THIS IS JUST A DREAM!
NOT JUST A DREAM, HAY LIN. THIS IS YOUR WORST NIGHTMARE.
WH—WHY ARE YOU DOING THIS TO ME? LET ME GO! LET ME GO!
YOU WILL BE THE FIRST, HAY LIN. AND THEN IT WILL BE YOUR FRIENDS' TURN TO FACE THE WRATH OF NERISSA!
LP!
DECIDED TO JOIN US AGAIN?
COULDN'T SLEEP?

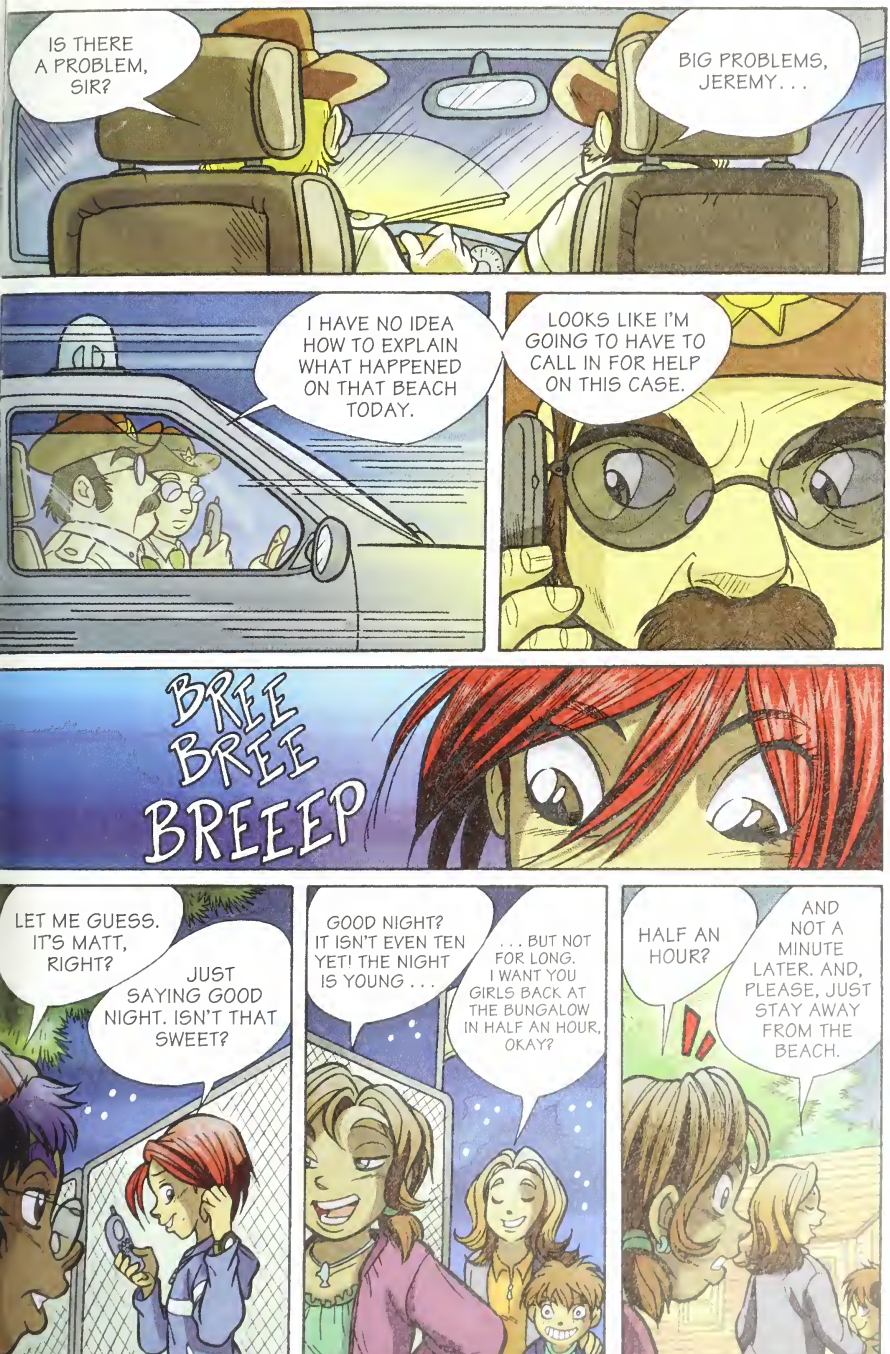
IT . . . IT WAS TERRIBLE! NERISSA . . . SHE . . . SHE SPOKE TO ME.
OH, NO! ARE YOU OKAY?
SHE GOT INTO YOUR DREAMS, TOO?
THIS ISN'T GOOD. WE HAVE NO WAY TO DEFEND OURSELVES AGAINST NERISSA IN OUR DREAMS.
SHE'S ABOUT TO STRIKE. SHE SAID THAT. . . THAT. . .
". . . I'LL BE HER FIRST TARGET."

LET'S GET BACK INSIDE . . .
WHA—?
WHUMP
HAY LIN!
GUYS! HELP!
KSSSSSSSSSSSS
I'M SINKING!
AAAGH!
GRAB MY HAND, HAY LIN! I'VE GOT YOU!
PULL ME UP! PULL ME UP!
KSSSSSSSSSSSSSSH
AHHHH

OKAY, THIS IS THE LAST TIME I TAKE A VACATION ON THIS BEACH.
THIS IS REALLY WEIRD. NOTHING LIKE THIS HAS EVER HAPPENED BEFORE.
RRRRR . . .
EEEK! THERE'S SOMETHING DOWN THERE! IT TOUCHED MY FOOT!
WHAT WAS IT?
LET'S CHECK IT OUT, CORNELIA!
WOW . . .
WHAT IS THIS PLACE?

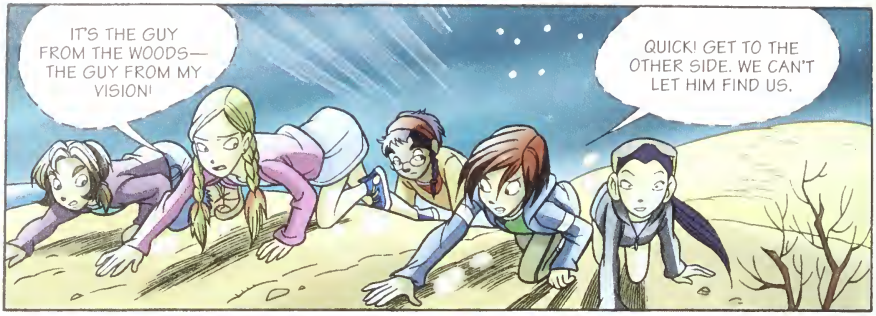
THESE WALLS ARE SCORCHING HOT. SOME INCREDIBLE SOURCE OF HEAT MUST HAVE TURNED THE SAND INTO GLASS.
I DON'T THINK ANYTHING NATURAL COULD HAVE CAUSED THIS . . .
YOU THINK IT WAS NERISSA?
I THINK THAT CAVE-IN WAS MEANT FOR US. SHE'S GETTING CLOSER.
HEY! WHAT ARE YOU DOING? GET OUT OF HERE, NOW!
OH, SORRY.
UM . . . OKAY.
YOU SHOULD BE MORE CAREFUL. YOU COULD'VE BEEN BURIED ALIVE.
WE WERE JUST CURIOUS, THAT'S ALL.
I'M GETTING OUTTA HERE.
OKAY, PEOPLE, LET'S CLEAR THE AREA. HELP'S ON THE WAY.
SURF
I CAN'T WAIT TO HEAR HOW THE POLICE EXPLAIN THIS ONE.

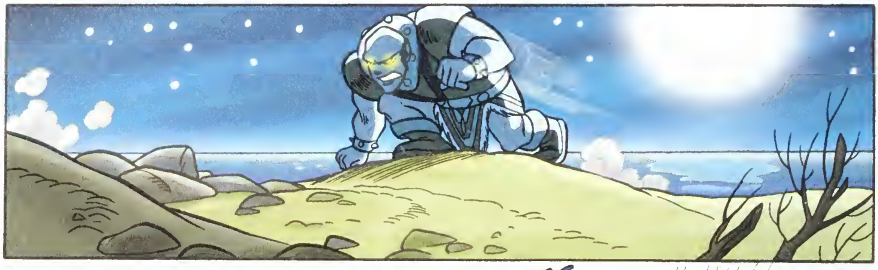

NOTHING TO SEE HERE, FOLKS.
IT WAS JUST A SIMPLE, HARMLESS CAVE-IN, CAUSED BY NATURAL MARINE EROSION.
IS HE FOR REAL?
HE'S LYING, RIGHT TO OUR FACES.
WE'RE JUST GOING TO CLOSE THIS SECTION OF THE BEACH FOR A COUPLE OF DAYS, BUT REST ASSURED...
...EVERYTHING WILL BE BACK TO NORMAL REAL SOON.
I HOPE THE NEXT TIME I SEE YOU YOU'RE ALL ON THE BEACH HAVING A GOOD TIME.
DON'T LET ANYONE GO NEAR THE RESTRICTED AREA!
YES, SIR!

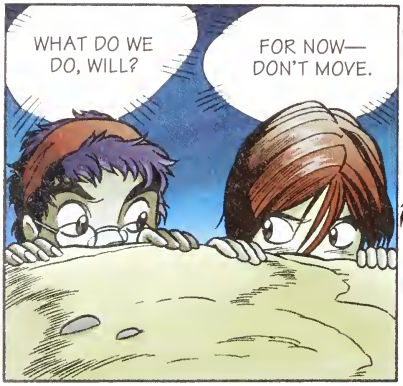

IS THERE A PROBLEM, SIR?
BIG PROBLEMS, JEREMY. . .
I HAVE NO IDEA HOW TO EXPLAIN WHAT HAPPENED ON THAT BEACH TODAY.
LOOKS LIKE I'M GOING TO HAVE TO CALL IN FOR HELP ON THIS CASE.
BREE BREE BREEEP
LET ME GUESS. IT'S MATT, RIGHT?
JUST SAYING GOOD NIGHT. ISN'T THAT SWEET?
GOOD NIGHT? IT ISN'T EVEN TEN YET! THE NIGHT IS YOUNG . . .
. . . BUT NOT FOR LONG. I WANT YOU GIRLS BACK AT THE BUNGALOW IN HALF AN HOUR, OKAY?
HALF AN HOUR?
AND NOT A MINUTE LATER. AND, PLEASE, JUST STAY AWAY FROM THE BEACH.

BUT THAT'S EXACTLY WHERE I WAS THINKING OF GOING! I WANT TO TAKE ANOTHER LOOK AT THAT UNDERGROUND PASSAGE.
BUT THERE ARE COPS EVERYWHERE GUARDING IT.
WE COULD TRY TO FIND A WAY AROUND THEM.
I DON'T KNOW ABOUT THIS, GUYS . . .
COME ON! WE HAVE TO. WE MIGHT FIND OUT SOMETHING ABOUT NERISSA.
OKAY, FINE. WE CAN SNEAK ACROSS THE HIGHWAY TO GET TO THE BEACH. BUT LET'S HURRY.
SO FAR, SO GOOD . . . NOW WHAT?
IT'S GOING TO BE TOUGH TO AVOID BEING SEEN WITH THE FULL MOON OUT TONIGHT.

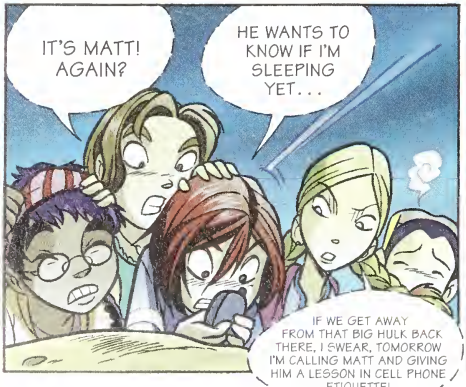
ANOTHER BEING LURKS BENEATH THE FULL MOON TONIGHT.
THIS IS YOUR MOMENT, KHOR. THE TIME HAS COME.
YOU HAVE YOUR ORDERS. NOW, GO . . .
DESTROY THE GUARDIANS!
OKAY, LET'S GO. REMEMBER—TRY TO SLIP DOWN INTO THE WATER WITHOUT MAKING TOO MUCH NOISE.
HEY, WHAT'S THAT? THERE'S SOMETHING MOVING OVER THERE.
WHO—OR WHAT—IS THAT?
I'VE SEEN HIM BEFORE!


IT'S THE GUY FROM THE WOODS—THE GUY FROM MY VISION!
QUICK! GET TO THE OTHER SIDE. WE CAN'T LET HIM FIND US.




WHAT DO WE DO, WILL?
FOR NOW—DON'T MOVE.

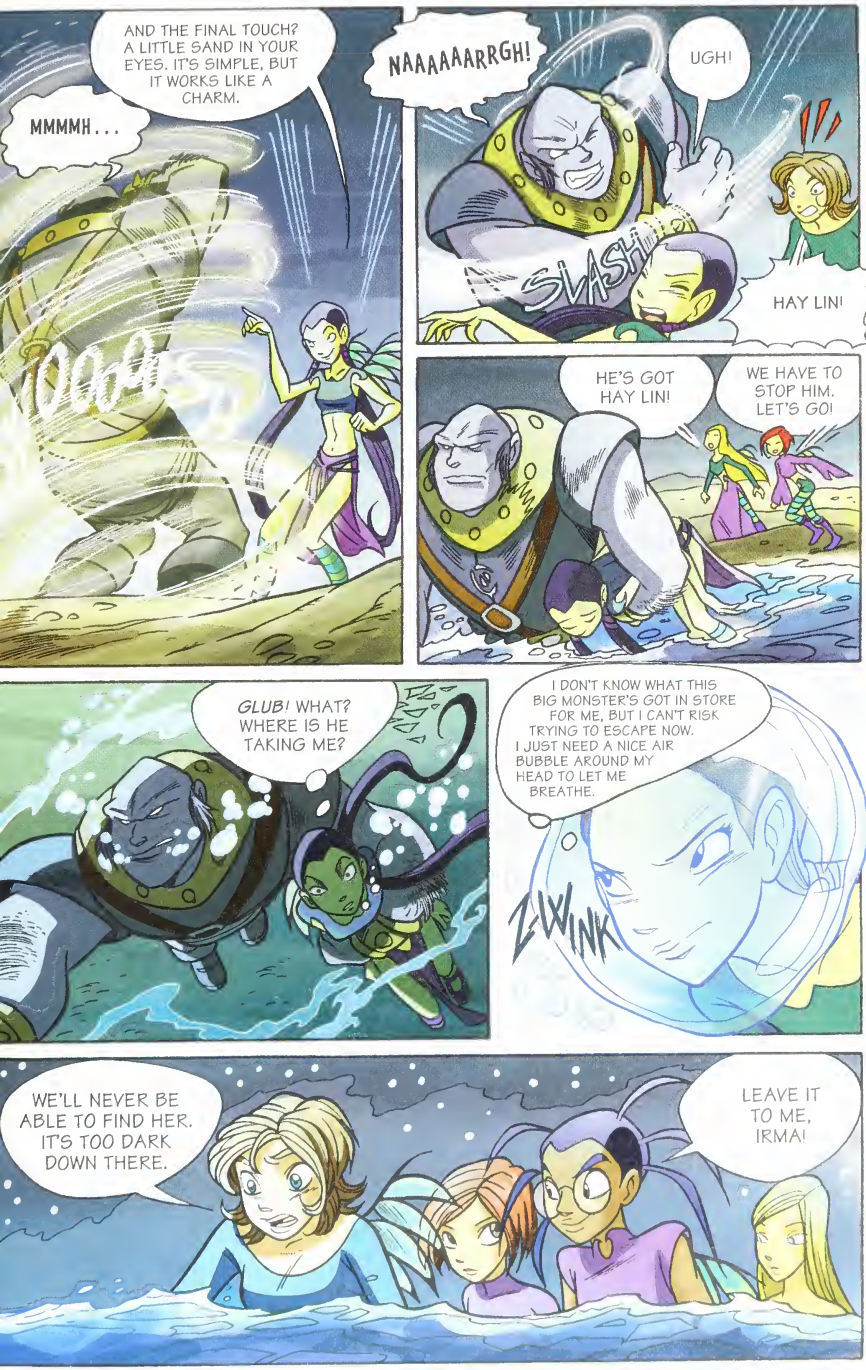
BREE BREE BREEEP BREE
!


IT'S MATT! AGAIN?
HE WANTS TO KNOW IF I'M SLEEPING YET...
IF WE GET AWAY FROM THAT BIG HULK BACK THERE, I SWEAR, TOMORROW I'M CALLING MATT AND GIVING HIM A LESSON IN CELL PHONE ETIQUETTE!

HEY! GIRLS! WHAT ARE YOU DOING OVER THERE?
!
UH...

WE . . . WE WERE JUST TAKING A WALK, OFFICERS.
YEAH! WE WEREN'T DOING ANYTHING WRONG, WE PROMISE.
WELL, YOU'D BETTER TAKE THAT WALK SOMEWHERE ELSE. THIS AREA IS . . .
RRRRRARGH!
AARGH!
OOOF!
JUMP
WHAT GOOD LUCK! IT'S THEM, KHOR! THE GIRLS YOU SHOULD DESTROY.
I—I THINK HE'S MAD AT US.
SO, LET'S GET READY TO FIGHT . . .
RRRRR . . .
GET YAN LIN'S GRANDDAUGHTER!
LOOK OUT!
OKAY, HEART OF CANDRACAR . . . DO YOUR THING.
AT WILL'S COMMAND, THE ORB RELEASES ITS ENERGY . . .
. . . AND ONCE AGAIN, W.I.T.C.H. IS TOGETHER!

I THINK IT'S TIME WE HAD A LITTLE TALK, DON'T YOU?
I WOULD TAKE HIS SILENCE AS A NO.
HE'S A BEAST OF FEW WORDS.
RRRRR . . .
WELL, YOU CAN'T SAY I DIDN'T TRY.
RRRROOAAR!
YIKES! HE DEFINITELY WANTS TO GET MY ATTENTION. HE MUST REALLY LIKE ME.
OBVIOUSLY, HE DOESN'T KNOW YOU VERY WELL.
DON'T GET TOO CLOSE TO HIM! THIS GUY ISN'T JUST BIG . . . HE'S QUICK, TOO.
WHAT DO YOU SAY WE TAKE HIM DOWN, TARANEE?
IT WOULD BE A PLEASURE
THUMP
HEY!
RRRRRR . . .
FAKOOOM
FZZ-ZZZAM


AND THE FINAL TOUCH? A LITTLE SAND IN YOUR EYES. IT'S SIMPLE, BUT IT WORKS LIKE A CHARM.
MMMMH...
Dod
NAAAAAARRGH!
UGH!
SLASH
HAY LIN!
HE'S GOT HAY LIN!
WE HAVE TO STOP HIM. LET'S GO!
GLUB! WHAT? WHERE IS HE TAKING ME?
I DON'T KNOW WHAT THIS BIG MONSTER'S GOT IN STORE FOR ME, BUT I CAN'T RISK TRYING TO ESCAPE NOW. I JUST NEED A NICE AIR BUBBLE AROUND MY HEAD TO LET ME BREATHE.
Z-WINK
WE'LL NEVER BE ABLE TO FIND HER. IT'S TOO DARK DOWN THERE.
LEAVE IT TO ME, IRMA!

MY SPHERES OF FIRE WORK UNDERWATER.
THEY'RE HEADING TOWARD THAT REEF.
I SEE THEM.
HNNF!
WE MADE IT.
THIS MUST BE NERISSA'S COVE. BUT SHE DOESN'T SEEM TO BE HERE . . .
I HAVE TO GET OUT OF HERE AND WARN THE OTHERS . . .
THE CHILD IS STILL ALIVE, KHOR! WHAT'S THE MEANING OF THIS? I GAVE YOU AN ORDER . . .
. . . AND ORDERS ARE MEANT TO BE FOLLOWED!
RRRR . . .
I WOULDN'T DO THAT IF I WERE YOU.
OOOF! WHY DOES SHE GET TO CRACK ALL THE GOOD LINES?
HEY! EASY ON THE GRIP. THAT HURTS!
SHAANF

HEY! I'M SO GLAD TO SEE YOU.
I BET YOU ARE! YOU STILL IN ONE PIECE, HAY LIN?
BA-WOOM
A LITTLE SCARED, BUT OTHERWISE FINE.
THAT WON'T KEEP US FROM GIVING YOU THE LESSON YOU DESERVE, PAL.
RRRRAARGH!
NOW, CORNELIA!
FZ
ZZZZZZAM
KRAK
KRUNCH
RRRGH . . .
AND NOW THAT WE'VE INTRODUCED OURSELVES, CAN WE START TO TALK IN A CIVILIZED MANNER?
YOU'VE LET THEM TRICK YOU! THIS BATTLE HAS BEEN LOST!
GET OUT OF THERE. USE THE SYMBOL!
RRRRRR!

KRAAAM
URGH!
WHERE . . . WHERE'D HE GO?
DOESN'T HE KNOW ITS RUDE TO RUN OFF WITHOUT EVEN SAYING GOOD-BYE . . .
ACTUALLY, HE DID LEAVE A MESSAGE.
IT'S NERISSA'S SEAL AGAIN.
NERISSA! I HAVEN'T EVEN MET HER YET, BUT HER NAME ALREADY ANNOYS ME.
AND HER FRIENDS AREN'T ANY BETTER THAN SHE IS!
THERE'S NOTHING MORE WE CAN DO HERE! WE'D BETTER HEAD BACK HOME . . .
". . . 'CAUSE WE ARE TOTALLY LATE!"
YEAH! BUT I HATE THE IDEA OF JUST SITTING AROUND AND WAITING FOR NERISSA'S NEXT MOVE!

EPILOGUE
MOUNT THANOS
A WARRIOR WITHOUT WEAPONS IS STILL A WARRIOR, KHOR! DESPITE EVERYTHING, YOU FOUGHT WELL . . .
. . . AND IT IS FOR THIS REASON THAT I GIVE YOU BACK WHAT THOSE FIVE TOOK AWAY FROM YOU. NEXT TIME YOU WILL HAVE BETTER LUCK.
SMILE, KHOR, BECAUSE WE WILL SOON WALK TRIUMPHANTLY DOWN THE PATH OF REVENGE . . .
"A LONG AND DIFFICULT PATH"
"A PATH WITH NO RETURN"

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